MASTER OF MUSIC EDUCATION THESIS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADEQUATE TEACHING PROCEDURE FOR THE TEACHING OF PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Samuel Alden Hoy

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AMERICAN FOUNDATION
FOR THE BLIND INC.

THESIS ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADEQUATE TEACHING PROCEDURE FOR THE TEACHING OF PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Submitted
by Samuel A. Hoy
for Master of Music degree

Directed by
Carlton A. Chaffee
Department of Music

Very little research has been undertaken in the field of teaching music to the visually handicapped. In teaching music to the visually handicapped, the teacher finds many problems which he must understand and solve before he can give instruction that will be effective. The inexperienced teacher would be in a position to develop a procedure for effective teaching if he had a guide to follow, and thus he would not proceed entirely on intuition and experiment. There is a need for research in this field of teaching exceptional children.

The writer has completed four years of teaching music at the South Dakota State School for the Blind and has drawn upon his experiences as a teacher of the visually handicapped. The American Foundation for the Blind allowed the writer to borrow copies of the proceedings of the biennial conventions of the American Association for Instructors of the Blind. These publications contain papers presented by teachers of the visually handicapped and constitute the main source of information for this study. Two questionnaires were sent to people interested in the education of the visually handicapped. One questionnaire was sent to teachers of piano in schools for the blind, the other was sent to graduates of schools for the visually handicapped.

THESIS ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AUDITORY TEACHING STRATEGY FOR THE TEACHING OF STATE VS THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Submitted
by Donald A. Hoy
for Master of State Degree

Directed by
Carlton A. Collins
Superintendent of Public

Very little research has been undertaken in the field of teaching music to the visually handicapped. In teaching music to the visually handicapped, the lessons from sighted students which do exist undoubtedness and solve before be one's instruction that will be effective. The inexperienced teacher would be in a position to develop a procedure for effective teaching if he had a guide to follow, and thus he would not proceed entirely on intuition and experiment. There is a need for research in this field of teaching educational skills.

The author has completed four years of teaching music at the South Dakota State School for the Blind and has drawn upon his experience as a teacher of the visually handicapped. The American Foundation for the Blind allowed the writer to review copies of the proceedings of the biennial conventions of the American Association for Instructors of the Blind. These publications contain papers presented by teachers of the visually handicapped and summarize the main moves of information for this study. Two questionnaires were sent to people interested in the education of the visually handicapped. One questionnaire was sent to teachers of piano in schools for the blind, the other was sent to principals of schools for the visually handicapped.

The recommendations of instructors of the visually handicapped have been carefully studied, and an attempt has been made to compile the information into a procedure for giving more effective instruction to piano students which will better fit them for life after they graduate from the school for the blind.

It is the writer's hope that those who read this thesis will gain a better understanding and appreciation of the problems of the teacher of the visually handicapped. There is a need for more research in this field in order that more can be done in improving the standards of instruction. It was found that the majority of teachers of music in schools for the visually handicapped had no training in teaching exceptional children before assuming their positions. All but a few teachers have learned to teach the visually handicapped after beginning their work in the school system. There is a definite need for better ways of procuring large note music for use with sight-saving students. At present teachers must enlarge the notes themselves if modified music is to be used. There is need for more provision for training the students for positions after they graduate from school, particularly in the teaching and entertainment fields. It is recommended that more people become interested in undertaking research in this field.

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It is the writer's hope that those who read this thesis will gain a better understanding and appreciation of the problems of the teacher of the visually handicapped. There is a need for more research in this field to prove that work can be done in improving the standards of instruction. It was found that the majority of teachers of music in schools for the visually handicapped had no training in teaching conventional musicians before assuming their positions. All but a few teachers have learned to teach the visually handicapped while employing their work in the school system. There is a definite need for better ways of preparing future male music for use with sight-saving students. If problem teachers must adapt the notes textbooks if medical music is to be used. There is need for more research for studying the methods for predicting after they graduate from school, particularly in the teaching and appreciation client. It is recommended that more people be interested in undertaking research in this field.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADEQUATE TEACHING PROCEDURE FOR THE TEACHING OF PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

By

Samuel Alden Hoy

B. S., General Beadle State Teachers College, 1949

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Music

Department of Music Education in the Graduate School
University of South Dakota
June, 1954

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PREFACE

The teaching of music to the visually handicapped is a field in which very little research has been undertaken. Much has been written on the subject of psychology of the blind, but it is difficult for the teacher of music to find suggestions that will help him to solve the problems peculiar to the teaching of music to the visually handicapped.

This is the reason why I have chosen the topic, "THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADEQUATE TEACHING PROCEDURE FOR THE TEACHING OF PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED." I taught music in the South Dakota State School for the Blind for four years. During this time I met many problems of teaching piano to the visually handicapped which bothered me very much. I hope to be able to contribute some solutions to these problems by undertaking this research.

I wish to express my appreciation to the following for their contribution to the writing of this thesis: Professor Carlton A. Chaffee, Department of Music Education of the University of South Dakota, who was my adviser; the American Foundation for the Blind for the use of their library; the teachers of piano in the schools for the visually handicapped who have shown their interest by answering my questionnaire; and the graduates of the South Dakota State School for the Blind and the Minnesota Braille and Sight-Saving School who answered my questions.

PREFACE

The teaching of music to the visually handicapped is a field in which very little research has been undertaken, much has been written on the subject of pedagogy of the blind, but it is difficult for the teacher of music to find suggestions that will help him to solve the problems peculiar to the teaching of music to the visually handicapped.

This is the reason why I have chosen the topic, "The development of an adequate teaching technique for the teaching of piano to the visually handicapped." I taught music in the South Dakota State School for the Blind for four years. During this time I met many problems of teaching piano to the visually handicapped which bothered me very much. I hope to be able to contribute some solutions to these problems by undertaking this research.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION.. 1

Statement of the Problem.............................. 1

Scope of the Problem.................................. 1

Survey of Related Literature.......................... 2

Method of Research.................................... 2

Anticipated Results................................... 3

II. THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED CHILD.................... 4

Characteristics of the Visually Handicapped Child..... 4

The Visually Handicapped Child's Reaction to Music.... 6

The Visually Handicapped Child's Capacity for Music... 7

III. THE PREPARATION NECESSARY FOR TEACHING PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED........................ 11

The Training of Teachers.............................. 11

The Braille Music Notation............................ 14

IV. KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THE ELEMENTARY GRADES......... 21

Introducing the Child to Music........................ 21

The First Year at the Piano........................... 23

Teaching Methods and Materials........................ 30

Location of Middle C and the Position of the Other Keys.. 31

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION..... 1

Statement of the Problem..... 1

Scope of the Problem..... 1

Survey of Related Literature..... 2

Method of Research..... 2

Delimited Results..... 3

II. THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED CHILD..... 4

Characteristics of the Visually Handicapped Child..... 4

The Visually Handicapped Child's Attitude to Music..... 6

The Visually Handicapped Child's Capacity for Music..... 7

III. THE MODIFICATIONS NECESSARY FOR TEACHING THEM BY THE VISUALLY SIGHTED..... 11

The Teaching of Theories..... 12

The Braille Music Notation..... 14

IV. CONSIDERATIONS FACING THE SIGHTEDNESS WORKER..... 21

Introducing the Child to Music..... 21

The First Year of the Child..... 23

Teaching Methods and Materials..... 27

Location of Blame & and the Position of the Other Days..... 31

Chapter

The Proper Use of Arms, Wrists, Hands, and Fingers.................... 34

Placing the Braille Book.................... 36

Teaching the Visually Handicapped Child Who Uses Ink-print Music.................... 36

V. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PIANIST.................... 40

The Importance of Training the Ear.................... 40

Advanced Braille Notation.................... 49

Teaching Staff Notation.................... 50

Practicing and Memorizing.................... 53

VI. THE VOCATIONAL PREPARATION OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PIANIST.................... 58

Vocational Possibilities for Visually Handicapped Pianists.................... 58

Giving Advanced Students an Opportunity to do Practice Teaching.................... 59

College Education for the Visually Handicapped... 62

The Teaching of Popular Music.................... 63

VII. CONCLUSION.................... 66

APPENDIX A. Questionnaire Sent to Piano Teachers in Schools for the Blind.................... 71

APPENDIX B. Piano Teachers in Schools for the Blind Who Answered the Questionnaire.................... 78

APPENDIX C. Questionnaire Sent to Former Piano Students of Schools for the Blind.................... 85

Chapter

The Proper Use of Arms, Wrists, Hands, and Fingers..... 34
Playing the Xylia Book..... 36
Teaching the Visually Handicapped Child into Jump Jack-Grips Music..... 38
V. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PLAYER..... 40
The Importance of Training the Ear..... 40
Advanced Scale Studies..... 42
Teaching Sight Notation..... 50
Practicing and Memorizing..... 53
VI. THE VOCATIONAL POTENTIALITY OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PLAYER..... 54
Vocational Possibilities for Visually Handicapped Students..... 54
Giving Advanced Students an Opportunity to do Practice Teaching..... 55
College Education for the Visually Handicapped... 60
The Teaching of Popular Music..... 63
VII. CONCLUSION..... 66
APPENDIX A. Questionnaire Sent to Piano Teachers in Sebonis for the Blind..... 71
APPENDIX B. Piano Teachers in Sebonis for the Blind who Answered the Questionnaire..... 72
APPENDIX C. Questionnaire Sent to Nurses Place Students of Sebonis for the Blind..... 73

Chapter

APPENDIX D. Personal Letters From Teachers of the Visually Handicapped........................ 89

BIBLIOGRAPHY.. 90

Chapter

APPENDIX D. Personal Letters From Members of the Visually Handicapped..... 89

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 90

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

1. Braille Cell.................................. 17
2. Braille Octave Signs.......................... 17
3. Braille Interval Signs........................ 18
4. Chord CEG..................................... 18
5. America....................................... 19
6. Braille Fingering Signs....................... 19
7. Standard Braille, Grade One and One-half. Relation of Music Braille to the Braille Alphabet........................ 20
8. Braille Key Signatures........................ 48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

1. Breslin Cell..... 17
2. Breslin Cutaway Sign..... 17
3. Breslin Lenswool Sign..... 18
4. Chord CDO..... 18
5. American..... 19
6. Breslin Propeller Sign..... 19
7. Generated Breslin, Dewie Cue and Ice-Melt.
   Relation of Main Breslin to the Breslin
   Alphabet..... 20
8. Breslin Key Signature..... 40

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Many beginning teachers of music in schools for the visually handicapped are very likely as unprepared to teach music through the medium of Braille notation as was the writer.[1] The inexperienced teacher would be in a position to develop a procedure for effective teaching if he had a guide to follow, and thus he would not proceed entirely on intuition and experiment. In teaching music to the visually handicapped the teacher finds many problems which he must understand and overcome before he can give instruction that will be effective. It is the writer's plan to examine and bring together the opinions of teachers who have met these problems and are able to offer possible solutions to them.

Scope of the Problem

Music education for the visually handicapped is a comprehensive problem. This study will be confined to the teaching of piano as is indicated in the title. By limiting the discussion to the teaching of piano it will be possible to place the emphasis on one phase of the music program and still consider problems that are applicable to the whole teaching situation.

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1. Thirty-six out of fifty teachers report that they had no previous training in teaching the visually handicapped.

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1. Twenty-six out of fifty teachers reported that they had no previous training in teaching the visually handicapped.

The term "visually handicapped" rather than "the blind" will be used as often as possible throughout the study to describe the students in schools for the visually handicapped. This term will be used because many of the students are not totally blind. Even though the partially-blind students must use Braille textbooks many have considerable sight. Many schools have sight-saving students who do not use Braille.

Survey of Related Literature

The writer was able to find only a small amount of reference material which applies to the subject of teaching music to the visually handicapped. The proceedings of the biennial conventions of the American Association of Instructors of the Blind contain many papers presented by music teachers. These publications and others are available at the library of the American Foundation for the Blind. An interesting thesis was written by Miss Alice Elizabeth McCuskey entitled "Teaching Piano to the Visually Handicapped." She made a survey of what was being done in schools for the visually handicapped in teaching piano by the class method, the use of ear-training, and the teaching of popular music. Many textbooks in music education contain suggestions which apply to teaching the visually handicapped as well as the sighted student. Various periodicals also contain helpful material.

Method of Research

Inasmuch as there is little published literature available on the topic of teaching music to the visually handicapped, two questionnaires were prepared to help the writer secure

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Method of Research

Inasmuch as there is little published literature available on the topic of teaching music to the visually handicapped, two questionnaires were prepared to help the writer secure

information. One extensive questionnaire was sent to the music departments of the schools for the visually handicapped in the United States, Canada, and the Territory of Hawaii with the request that they be given to the piano teachers. Another questionnaire was sent to former students of piano in the South Dakota State School for the Blind and the Minnesota Braille and Sight-Saving School. The writer also drew upon his own experience as a music teacher in the South Dakota State School for the Blind. Permission was granted by the American Foundation for the Blind to borrow several publications from their library. A review was made of available literature in the University of South Dakota library. Several people who are engaged in teaching music to the visually handicapped were interviewed by letter concerning specific problems. The writer purchased several manuals of Braille and staff notation for first-hand study.

Anticipated Results

The writer hopes to develop a procedure of teaching piano that will enable instructors to develop an effective way of teaching piano to the visually handicapped. It is not the intention to compile a course of study.

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Delimited Problem

The writer hopes to develop a procedure of teaching piano that will enable instructors to develop an effective way of teaching piano to the visually handicapped. It is not the intention to compile a course of study.

CHAPTER II

THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED CHILD

Characteristics of the Visually Handicapped Child

The average visually handicapped child is basically no different from the sighted child except that the visually handicapped child receives little or no stimulus through vision, depending upon the degree of his visual handicap. The totally blind child may have developed his sense of hearing so that he is able to concentrate more on sounds than does the child who sees, but his hearing will not necessarily be more acute. His tactile sense will usually become more acute through training, but the sighted child would soon develop the same ability to use his sense of touch if it were necessary for him to do so. Some totally blind children are able to use their sense of smell to identify objects and their surroundings, but the writer has observed that many blind people have no better discrimination than those who are able to see.

"Totally blind people must build their conception of the world by the use of the remaining senses. Hayes found that totally blind children and adults do surprising things with hearing, smell, and touch, but careful measurements do not show that the totally blind are superior to the seeing in the fineness of sense discrimination. Their attainments must,

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therefore, be the result of long continued practice."[1]

"Visually handicapped children are mentally about like other children. They may be slower to learn to do certain things but this does not necessarily mean that they are less bright."[2] Many children with severe visual handicaps enter schools for the visually handicapped only after repeated failures in the public schools. Overageness or age-grade retardation ranges from one to five years. As the result of their failures,many times these pupils have a feeling of frustration that is hard to overcome. In many cases where a child has been born with a visual handicap there is often an additional defect which may check his ability to learn. On the other hand, many children who have had a loss of vision as the result of an accident or an illness are hardly different at all from seeing children in their ability to learn. Many visually handicapped children know almost as much about the world they live in as does a normal child. Each visually handicapped child has his own characteristics which often make it impossible to use the same methods of teaching with all children.[3] According to Dr. Hayes the percentage of visually handicapped children at the average or superior intelligence is smaller than that of the general school population. "The percentage of dull, borderline, and feeble-minded is much larger. The use of achievement tests with blind pupils reveals

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1. S. P. Hayes, Encyclopedia of Educational Research, (Revised ed.), Macmillan, New York, 1952, p. 843.
2. "Blind Child Needs Time," Science News Letter, LXVI (August 22, 1953), 124.
3. Personal observation by the writer.

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1. J. F. Lowe, Principles of Exceptional Children (revised ed.), Indianapolis, Ind. Sept., 1955, p. 241.
2. "Blind Child Needs Care," Science News Letter, LVII (August 22, 1953), 126.
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that although visually handicapped children begin their work more or less on a par with the seeing, they fall increasingly behind as they progress from grade to grade with the result that many pupils are several years overage for their grade."[4] Many visually handicapped children are unable to complete satisfactorily the school work as required by the course of study.[5]

The Visually Handicapped Child's Reaction to Music

"The child who is without sight reacts to sound with peculiar sensitivity, and in this world of sounds music makes a particular appeal to him."[6] "These children find in music a leisure time activity, a recreation that is invaluable to them, and a means of self-expression enabling the child and later the adult to live more fully and happily in his own environment."[7] "Music is one of the pleasures of life that the blind can enjoy to the fullest and one in which they may participate extensively. For the visually handicapped child music contributes greatly in providing an outlet for emotional disturbances."[8]

It has often been claimed that blindness can create musical talent. In the foreward to one of the catalogs of the Lighthouse School the fallacy of this assumption is pointed out:

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4. Hayes, p. 844.
5. Personal observation by the writer.
6. Merle E. Frampton and Hugh G. Rowell, Education of the Handicapped, World Book, New York, 1940, p. 351.
7. Alice Elizabeth McCuskey, Teaching Piano to the Visually Handicapped, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Ohio State University, Columbus, 1944, p. 4.
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7. Alice Elizabeth McCreery, Teaching Piano to the Visually Handicapped, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Ohio State University, Columbus, 1944, p. 4.
8. Ibid., p. 5.

> Loss of sight in no way affects musical appreciation or musicianship. Nor does it enhance it. A common misconception is that blindness gives birth to musical talent. A blind person may have perfect pitch or be tone deaf. However, because of blindness a power of concentration and ability to listen intently develop and contribute greatly to the progress, advancement, and musicianship of a talented blind student.[9]

The visually handicapped child must absorb much of what he learns by hearing rather than by seeing. He will get much enjoyment from listening to the sounds about him and will be delighted when he hears the songs of birds, or any sound which gives him a picture. Musical sounds mean much to him and, he will usually be eager to produce musical sounds as well as to hear them.

<u>The Visually Handicapped Child's Capacity for Music</u>

The teacher of visually handicapped children should not assume that all students are going to make the same progress in their study of piano. Each child will have different abilities and capacities for music. Some will be able to make much progress and learn quickly while others will be very slow. The statement of Bernard Kirshbaum regarding the sighted child's capacity for music is applicable to the visually handicapped child.

> Each piano student must be regarded as a growing personality, with definite rights of his own. We would all like to see our students become fine pianists and outstanding artists. We would like to start out beginners on scales and finger drills, develop their hands to the utmost degree of flexibility, and take

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9. Foreward to a catalog of the Lighthouse School, <u>The Lighthouse Music School</u>, 1951, p. 3.

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7. Grossman in a reading of the sightless School, The Lighthouse Braile School. 1952. p. 3.

> them through the great literature of music. But in the makeup of each and every child there are traits which preclude the possibility of some one or more of the matters we hold in mind as the ideal course for piano mastery. Some pupils are capable of only a small dose of scales, and then such drills must be abandoned. Others can successfully stick to scales for ten years, if necessary. Some will memorize pieces easily; others more slowly; and some will never succeed. To some a sonata will be a great thrill; others will labor over it and master it credibly; but a good many will be unable to digest it.[10]

It is a general policy in schools for the visually handicapped to give each child an opportunity to work with music and gain as much from it as his capacity will allow. The visually handicapped child is no different from the sighted child in his appreciation of music. This idea is expressed by Lane Frisby.

> We cannot over estimate the importance of teachers of music and the part they play in the scheme of things where the blind are concerned. The one art ready for all is music. Comparatively few students are destined for the top of the ladder as concert artists. But, broadly speaking, all alike are capable of having the latent spark aroused. A surprising number, under sympathetic and critical guidance,will develop that love of music which will enrich their whole lives. Therefore, our objective is not for the training of the talented child alone, but the training of each individual should be conducted so that music would bring to the child the greatest measure of happiness. Some children should learn to play, some to sing, some to listen, some few should be urged to professional perfection, others to amateur accomplishment but each to that point where music would fill its finest place in his life. We must teach the child to know something of self-appreciation and self-expression. Mr. James Francis Cook, President of Presser Foundation, says that music under a trained teacher, will do these things: intensify the powers of concentration, promote accuracy, coordinate mind, muscle, and nerve,

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10. Bernard Kirshbaum, "The Pupil's Interest in Piano Study," Etude (July, 1953), 26.

time through the great literature of music. But in the memory of each and every child there are traits which produce the probability of some one or more of the artists we look to right as the final course for piano mastery. Some pupils are capable of only a small term of lessons, but have much ability that be developed. Others can successfully attain to studies for ten years, if necessary. One will memorize pieces easily; others more slowly and some will never succeed. In some a studies will be a great delight; others will labor over it and master it creditably, but a good many will be unable to appreciate it.[1]

It is a general policy in schools for the visually handicapped to give each child an opportunity to work with music and gain as much from it as his capacity will allow. The visually handicapped child is no different from the sighted child in his appreciation of music. This idea is strengthened by Jane Friedy.

> In recent very authentic the importance of teachers of music and the part they play in the science of giving sense the blind are concerned. The one not ready for all in music. Comparatively few students are destined for the top of the ladder as concert artists. But, broadly speaking, all girls are capable of having the lasting music aroused, a sustaining number, under sympathetic and efficient guidance, will develop that love of music which will enrich their whole lives. Therefore, our objective is not for the training of the talented girls alone, but the training of each individual should be conducted so that music work bring to the child the greatest measure of happiness. Here children should learn to play, come to sing, and to listen. Most few should be urged to instrumental performing, others to musical appreciation; but each to that point where music work will be present place in his life. We must teach the child to know appreciated of self-expression and self-expression. Mr. Jesse Tharpe (sic), President of Tharpe Foundation, says that music under a trained teacher, will do more children: increase the powers of concentration, provide discipline, coordinate mind, muscle, and nerve,

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10. Harold Simmons, "Is Music a Interest in Blind Study," Teacher (July, 1931), 26.

> develop the memory, quicken mental activity, encourage self-expression, develop poise, enrich the taste, and bring greater joy into life. A teacher would almost have to be a paragon to inspire all of this, but with the proper background, an equipment of loving understanding, adaptability, sympathy, and a certain amount of technical knowledge it can be done in a great or less degree.[11]

It is the opinion of the writer that visually handicapped children should be treated as though they are no different from children with no handicaps. If the teacher makes normal requirements of the child, the child will usually take the challenge and try to do his best. Often the writer would be teaching the same piece to the visually handicapped student that he had assigned to a child living in the local community. When the handicapped child was told that the sighted child was learning the same piece, he would attempt to learn it first. In an article entitled "Junior Music," Grace Werntz has said:

> We should expect as much from the blind boys and girls in their music as we would from any other children of the same age and grade. If we truly wish the students to be normal, we must make normal requirements of them and have a normal attitude toward them. Many of these requirements do necessitate more attention and, some of them different procedures to secure desired results. . . . In general we have the same experience as teachers of the sighted. The children must be taught how to read, how to count slowly aloud, must have ear-training, and learn how to produce instead of mere sound, tone. Most technical difficulties are those common to piano students or peculiar to the individual student without reference to blindness.[12]

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11. Lane Frisby, "Vital Problems of Music Teachers in Schools for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Twenty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1928, pp. 370-371.
12. Grace Werntz, "Junior Music," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Twenty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1928, pp. 372-374.

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> We should expect as much from the blind boys and girls in their music as we would from any children of the same age and grade. If we truly view the students to be normal, we must make normal requirements of them and have a normal attitude toward them. Many of these requirements do necessitate more attention and, some of them different procedures to assure desired results. . . . In general we have the same experience as teachers of the sighted. The children must be taught how to read, how to count slowly aloud, must have memorizing, and learn how to produce tones of more sound, time. Most technical difficulties are those common to piano students or musician to the individual student without reference to blindness.[12]

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11. Jane Riley, "Vital Problems of Music Teachers in Schools for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Twenty-third Biennial Convention, 1933, p. 270-271.

12. Grace Verne Dan, "Inside Music," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Twenty-third Biennial Convention, 1933, pp. 272-273.

In the writer's experience he found that the average visually handicapped child has nearly the same capacity for music as does the sighted child. It does take the handicapped child longer to learn certain types of pieces because he must memorize everything he learns to play. The handicapped child must have the patience and willingness to work harder than the sighted child to learn his music. Likewise, the teacher must be ready to help him overcome his difficulties, and he must possess an almost unlimited patience in working with the students.

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CHAPTER III

THE PREPARATION NECESSARY FOR TEACHING PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

The Training of Teachers

According to information compiled from the questionnaires sent to teachers of piano in schools for the visually handicapped, most of the teachers are well qualified professionally in the music field. Eleven teachers indicate that they do not have degrees but they have studied under private teachers or attended a music school which does not give a degree. Twenty-six teachers have bachelor's degrees, nine have completed the work required for the master's degree, and one teacher has a doctor's degree.

Of the fifty teachers who answered the questionnaire, twenty-six have been teaching piano to the visually handicapped for less than ten years; twelve have been teaching from ten to twenty years. Three teachers have taught over thirty years.

Only a few of these teachers received any training in the teaching of music to the visually handicapped before assuming the position of piano teacher. "Given a system of Braille music characters by which the mechanics of music may be mastered by the pupil, each teacher seems to follow his own method of presentation and to direct the learning of the pupil

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THE PREPARATION PROGRAMS FOR TEACHING PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

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Only a few of these teachers received any training in the teaching of music to the visually handicapped before assuming the position of piano teacher. Given a system of braille music characters by which the mechanics of music may be mastered by the pupil, each teacher seems to follow his own method of presentation and to direct the learning of the pupil

in what seems to him to be the best direction."[1] Thirty-six out of the fifty teachers answering questionnaires state that they had no preparation for teaching the visually handicapped. Of these thirty-six teachers, seven are blind or partially-blind and have gone to schools for the visually handicapped where they have, of course, learned Braille music notation and can recall the method by which they were taught. This leaves twenty-nine teachers who began their teaching of the visually handicapped as did the writer, with no preparation or knowledge of Braille notation or the ways of teaching these exceptional children. Of the fourteen teachers who state that they had received some preparation for teaching piano to the visually handicapped, only four are sighted people.

Of the fifty teachers answering the questionnaire, twelve are totally blind, five are partially blind, and the rest, of course, have their vision. All the visually handicapped teachers were students in schools for the visually handicapped at one time or another except one who is partially-blind. All of the visually handicapped teachers who do not see enough to read ink-print music employ sighted people to help them in transcribing and reading new music for which they have no Braille copy.

It seems that any person who teaches piano to visually handicapped students who are using Braille notation should

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1. W. E. Allen, "Current Practices in the Teaching of Instrumental Music in Schools for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-fourth Biennial Convention, 1938, p. 127.

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1. . E. Allen, "Current Practices in the Teaching of Instrumental Music to Schools for the Blind," Association Proceedings of Instructors of the Blind, Sixty-Fourth Biennial Convention, 1956, p. 127.

have a thorough understanding of Braille notation. This is no problem for the teacher who is visually handicapped and has received a part of his education in a school for the visually handicapped. The sighted teacher, however, who very probably has never seen music in Braille notation, and is not familiar with the Braille system of music notation, will almost always find it necessary to learn the Braille notation if he is going to teach successfully. It is also of value to have some knowledge of literary Braille in addition to the music Braille since both systems are used in Braille music for the piano.

Most of the sighted teachers who are teaching Braille students have a knowledge of Braille music notation and are able to read it and write it with varying degrees of proficiency. Of the teachers who answered questionnaires, only six indicate that they do not understand Braille notation. Four of these teachers are just beginning to teach and have not had time to learn it. Because few of the sighted teachers had any preparation for teaching music to the visually handicapped before starting to teach, most of them apparently must have learned Braille music notation in much the same manner as did the writer. He had no knowledge at all of Braille when he began to teach, but was fortunate to get help from another teacher who had taken lessons at one time and remembered some Braille notation. However, the writer was not able to master Braille notation all at once and had to depend on the Braille Music Chart and help from advanced students until he had advanced

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enough to proceed by himself. He found that the best method for him to use in learning was to transcribe simple pieces in the beginner's piano books. He learned literary Braille at the same time. The writer recommends the use of a Braille writer rather than a slate and stylus because one can get a better picture of the finished product and can write faster on the machine. It is also recommended that the Braille paper used should be as heavy as is possible so that the dots will hold their shape longer.

The Braille Music Notation

A complete system of Braille music notation has been developed for the use of the visually handicapped musician. It seems at first to be very difficult to understand, but it really is easier to learn than the ink-print notation. It seems that any person with perseverance should have no difficulty in understanding Braille notation when he has once mastered the fundamental concepts of Braille. Mr. Robert Sabin has expressed the following observation:

> The musical education of the blind presents problems that have taxed the ingenuity of teachers and inventors for centuries. They have been solved brilliantly, and today it is possible for a blind musician not only to acquire a good technique but also to enjoy a vast literature that has been made available in Braille scores. One of the most fascinating aspects of this education is the problem of notation. Many experiments were tried before a workable system was found, and it has taken over a century to improve and to standardize that method of reading and writing music. In 1929 an international congress met in Paris for the purpose of standardizing the symbols used in Braille musical notation.[2]

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2. Robert Sabin, "The Lighthouse Music School; Music for Blind Students," *Musical America*, LXXII (May, 1952), 25-26.

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The Braille Music Machine

A complete system of Braille music notation has been developed for the use of the visually handicapped musician. It seems at first to be very difficult to memorized, but it really is easier to learn than the ink-print notation. It seems that any person with perseverance should have no difficulty in understanding Braille notation when he has once mastered the fundamental elements of Braille. Mr. Robert Sabin has commented upon following observations:

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5. Robert Sabin, "The Literature Music School; Music for Blind Students," Musical Educators Journal (May, 1958), 32-33.

Any person who has used the literary Braille system should have little or no difficulty in understanding how the Braille system of musical notation is constructed. The standardized literary Braille alphabet is arranged in four lines of ten symbols each. In the first line are the symbols for the letters A through J; in the second line are the letters K through T; in the third line are the letters U through Z and the symbols for the words and, for, of, the, and with; and in the fourth line are the symbols for the diphthongs ch, gh, sh, th, wh, ed, er, ou, ow, and the letter W. The last seven letters in each row are used for notes. The time value of each note is indicated by the dot combination that is used in the lower third of the cell. The first line contains eighth notes, which do not have dots three and six; the second line contains half notes or thirty-second notes which have the dot three; the third line contains whole notes or sixteenth notes which have both dots three and six; and the fourth line contains quarter notes or sixty-fourth notes which have the dot six. Since the seven notes in music are A, B, C, D, E, F, and G; it is sometimes a little confusing to understand that the Braille notation begins with the note C. In examining a Braille music chart one will find the notes in this order: C, D, E, F, G, A, and B. The upper four dots of the Braille cell are used to identify the note. The two lower dots are used only to indicate the time value. The writer does not believe that children should try to learn the notes as being like the letters of the alphabet. Some students will try to

Any person who has used the literary Braille system should have little or no difficulty in understanding the Braille system of musical notation in contractes. The abbreviated literary Braille alphabet is changed to four lines of musical symbols each. In the first line are the symbols for the letters A through J; in the second line are the letters K through T; in the third line are the letters U through Z and the symbols for the words and, for, of, the, and with; and in the fourth line are the symbols for the diphthongs ch, gh, sh, th, wh, ed, er, ou, ow, and the letter W. The last seven letters in each row are used for notes. The time value of each note is indicated by the dot combination that is used in the lower third of the cell. The first line contains eighth notes, which do not have dots there and six; the second line contains half notes or thirty-second notes which have the dot one; the third line contains whole notes or sixteenth notes which have both dots there and six; and the fourth line contains quarter notes or sixty-fourth notes which have the dot six. Since the seven notes in music are A, B, C, D, E, F, and G, it is essential a little contrary to understand that the Braille notation begins with the note G. In examining a Braille music chart one will find the notes in this order: G, D, E, F, G, A, and B. The upper four dots of the Braille cell are used to identify the note. The two lower dots are used only to indicate the time value. The notes does not behave that children should try to learn the notes as being like the letters of the alphabet. Some students will try to

remember that the eighth note C looks like the letter D, the half note C looks like the letter N, the sixteenth note C like the letter Y, and the quarter note C like the letters th. This would mean that the child must learn twenty-eight different notes. If, however, he learns that the eighth note C does not have the dots three and six, that adding the dot three makes it a half note, that adding both dots three and six makes it a sixteenth note, and that adding only dot six makes it a quarter note, then he has to learn just the seven symbols that form the eighth notes.[3]

It is very important that the teacher of Braille students should give each student the very strongest foundation possible in reading elementary Braille music so that the pupil will know the meaning of every symbol. This is very important because students must be able to understand very complicated notation when they study advanced music. What may be rather simple to read in ink-print music by an advanced sighted student can be the most complicated confusion in Braille notation even to the experienced Braille reader unless he knows exactly what each symbol means and is able to interpret the notation.

The clef signs are not used in Braille notation. Instead the pitch levels of notes are indicated by signs that tell in which octave they are located. A span of seven octaves, supplemented by an upper octave and a lower octave, is used. Octaves, running from C to the B above, are numbered in

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3. A Braille notation chart will be found on page 20.

remember that the signal mode C loops line and battery 2, the call mode C loops line and battery 1, the alternate mode C line line battery 1, and the talking mode C line and battery 2.

This small-scale map the relay must have been specially-designed affairs. It, however, is known that the signal mode C loop not have the drop three and six, that making the non-zero mode it a half mode, that making both drop three and six zero is a attention mode, and that making only one six makes it a quarter mode, then it has to learn that the zero symbols that the signals mean.[3]

It is very important that the designer of the relay network should give much attention the very important functional possibilities in making elementary logical units so that the world will know the meaning of every signal. This is very important because students must be able to construct very complicated relations when they study advanced mode. Some may be rather simple to read in two-period mode by an advanced student students can be the most complicated mechanism in mechanical relation even to the experienced Bell's trouble engineer unless he know exactly what each symbol means and is able to interpret the mechanism.

The other signs are not used in Bell's notation. Instead the right lower of notes are indicated by signs that tell in which order they are inserted. A group of every relays, supplemented by an upper cause and a lower output, is used. Groups, running from 0 to the 3 groups, are numbered in

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3. A complete notation chart will be found on page 41.

sequence. There are nine octave marks, although in piano music only seven are used. The octave sign is always placed before the first note in the line and is used again when the distance from one note to another is more than a fifth or when the distance from one note to the next is more than a third when the melody passes from one octave to another. The writer when transcribing music indicates the octave change every time the notes pass from one octave into the next. The octave signs are composed of the dots on the right hand side of the cell and are placed just before the note which is affected by the change.

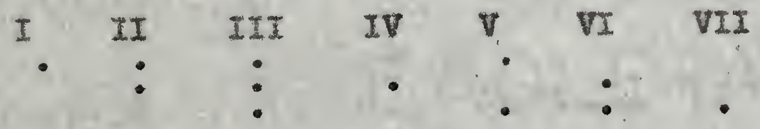
Fig. 1

Braille Cell

1 . . 4
2 . . 5
3 . . 6

Fig. 2

Braille Octave Signs



Especially interesting is the treatment of intervals in chords which may be compared with the figured bass in ink-print musical notation. Only the lowest note of the chord is written as such. The other notes are represented, from lowest to highest, by signs indicating the intervals that they form with the lowest note. (Some people say that they prefer to use

sequence. There are some subtle shifts, although the piano music only rarely are used. The octave line is always placed before the first note in the line and is used again when the distance from one note to another is more than a fifth or when the distance from one note to the next is more than a third when the melody passes from one octave to another. The writer uses transcribing music indicates the octave change every time the notes pass from one octave into the next. The octave signs are composed of the line on the right hand side of the staff and are placed just before the note which is affected by the change.

Fig. 1

Braille Cell

1 . . 4
2 . . 5
3 . . 6

Fig. 2

Braille Octave Signs

2	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
.	:	:	.	.	:	.
	:	:			:	
	:	:			:	

Especially interesting is the problems of intervals in chords which may be compared with the figured bass in half-print musical notation. Only the lowest note of the chord is written as such. The other notes are represented, from lowest to highest, by signs indicating the intervals that they form with the lowest note. (Some people say that they prefer to use

the intervals from highest to lowest.) There are interval signs for the second interval through the octave. They must not be confused with finger numbers which also appear immediately after the note.

Fig. 3

Braille Interval Signs

2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th Octave

The chord CEG is indicated in Braille notation as the note C, third interval, and fifth interval.

Fig. 4

Chord CEG

the intervals from highest to lowest.) There are interval signs for the second interval through the octave. They must not be confused with finger numbers which also appear immediately after the note.

Fig. 3

Braille Interval Signs

2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th Octave

The chord CEG is indicated in braille notation as the note C, third interval, and fifth interval.

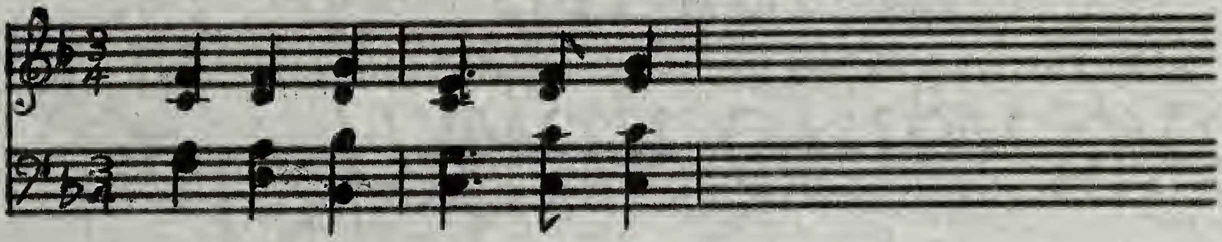
Fig. 4

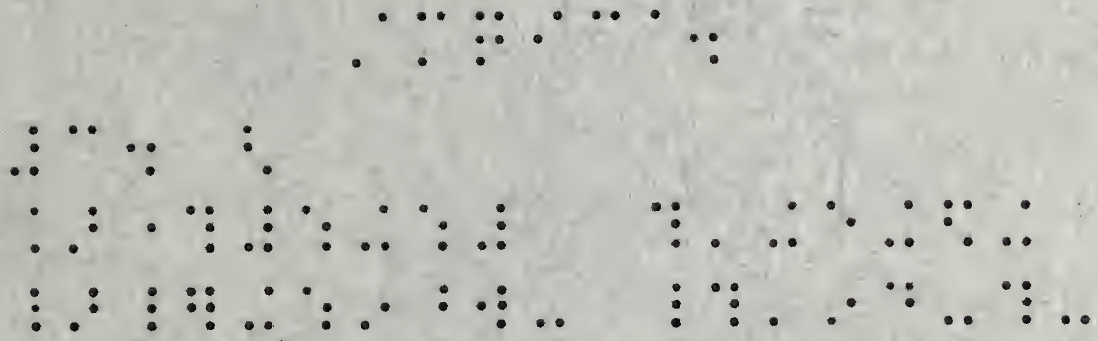
Chord CEG

The following figure shows the relationship between the Braille notation and the ink-print notation of the first two bars of the song "America."

Fig. 5

AMERICA





The method of indicating the fingering of notes is also a group of symbols different from the regular Braille numbering. The finger number is composed of the dots on the left hand side of the Braille cell and is placed just after the note or the interval sign in the case of chords.

Fig. 6

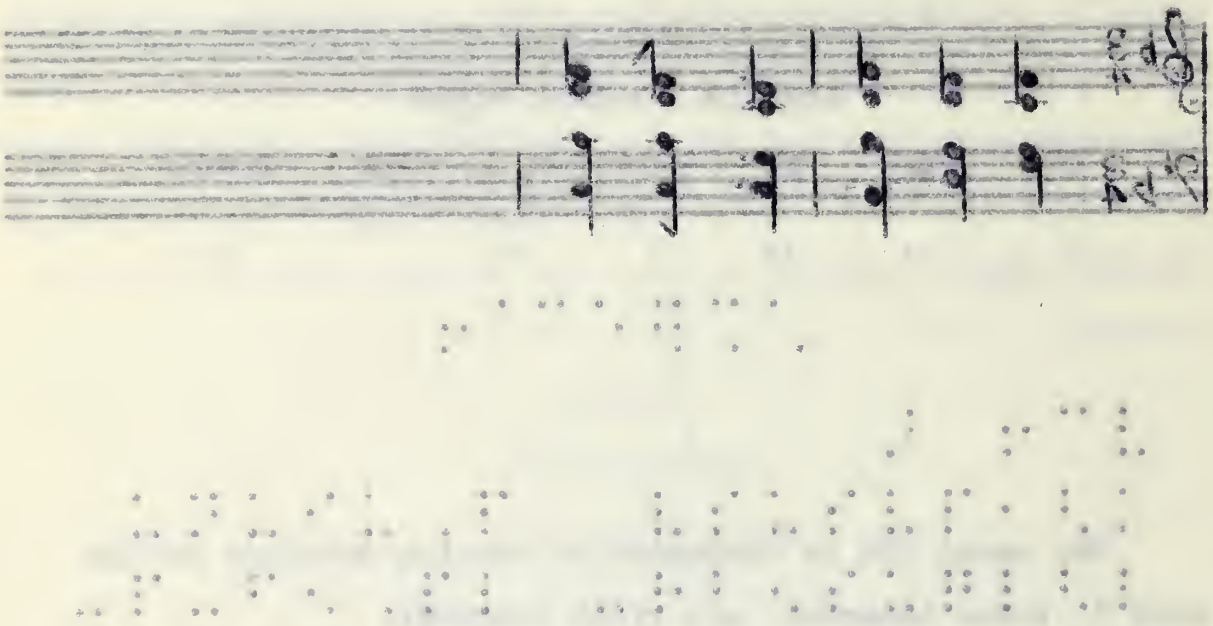
Braille Fingering Signs

1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

The following figure shows the relationship between the Braille notation and the lab-point notation of the first two bars of the song "America."

Fig. 5

AMERICA



The method of indicating the fingering of notes is also a group of symbols different from the regular Braille numbering. The finger number is composed of the dots on the left hand side of the Braille cell and is placed just after the note or the interval sign in the case of chords.

Fig. 6

Braille Fingering Signs

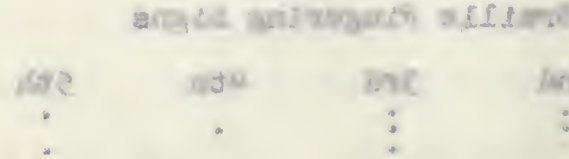


Fig. 7

STANDARD BRAILLE, GRADE ONE AND ONE-HALF. RELATION OF MUSIC BRAILLE TO THE BRAILLE ALPHABET

Alphabet	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
Numerals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
Line 1	⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠛	⠓	⠊	⠚
Eighth Notes				C	D	E	F	G	A	B

Alphabet	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
Line 2	⠅	⠇	⠍	⠝	⠕	⠏	⠟	⠗	⠎	⠞
Half Notes Thirty-second Notes				C	D	E	F	G	A	B

Alphabet	u	v	x	y	z	and	for	of	the	with
Line 3	⠥	⠧	⠭	⠽	⠵	⠯	⠿	⠷	⠮	⠾
Whole Notes Sixteenth Notes				C	D	E	F	G	A	B

Diphthongs	ch	gh	sh	th	wh	ed	er	ou	ow	w
Line 4	⠡	⠣	⠩	⠹	⠱	⠫	⠻	⠳	⠪	⠺
Quarter Notes Sixty-fourth Notes				C	D	E	F	G	A	B

The sign for Sharp is the SH symbol.

The sign for Flat is the GH symbol.

The sign for Natural is the CH symbol.

The sign for Eighth Rest is the symbol for X.

The sign for Quarter or Sixty-fourth Rest is the symbol for V.

The sign for Half or Thirty-second Rest is the symbol for U.

The sign for Whole or Sixteenth Rest is the symbol for M.

Fig. 7

STANDARD DRAFTING, BRAILLE AND MUSIC-BRAILLE, SELECTION OF MUSIC
BRAILLE TO THE BRAILLE ALPHABET

Alphabet	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
Numerals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Line 1	⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠛	⠓	⠊
Eighth notes				C	D	E	F	G	A

Alphabet	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r
Line 2	⠚	⠅	⠇	⠍	⠝	⠕	⠏	⠟	⠗
Half notes				C	D	E	F	G	A
Thirty-second notes									

Alphabet	s	t	u	v	x	y	z	and	for
Line 3	⠎	⠞	⠥	⠧	⠭	⠽	⠵	⠯	⠿
Whole notes				C	D	E	F	G	A
Sixteenth notes									

Diphthongs	ch	gh	sh	th	wh	ed	er	ou	ow
Line 4	⠉⠓	⠛⠓	⠩	⠹	⠱	⠫	⠻	⠳	⠪
Quarter notes				C	D	E	F	G	A
Sixty-fourth notes									

The sign for Sharp is the SH symbol.

The sign for Flat is the GH symbol.

The sign for Natural is the UH symbol.

The sign for Eighth Rest is the symbol for R.

The sign for Quarter or Sixty-fourth Rest is the symbol for V.

The sign for Half or Thirty-second Rest is the symbol for H.

The sign for Whole or Sixteenth Rest is the symbol for R.

CHAPTER IV

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THE ELEMENTARY GRADES

Introducing the Child to Music

The musical education of the visually handicapped child should begin as soon as he enters school. Now that nearly all homes contain radios most of the children will have had a great deal of pre-school listening experience. Some children come from homes where they have had many kinds of musical experiences. A few will have had no musical experience at all.

The child is usually introduced to music by means of a program of rote singing, playing musical games, listening to music, and learning to play simple musical instruments. "The general objective of music teaching from the kindergarten through the elementary grades is to develop the child's immature, natural, and original interest in rhythm and tonality into a true love of good music based upon an intelligent understanding and appreciation of music's moods, form, and notation."[1]

Almost every school requires that the child be given instruction in piano when he reaches the third grade. A few schools begin lessons earlier than this but most teachers feel

1. Eleanor W. Thayer, "Music, Kindergarten Through the Elementary Grades," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 172.

CHAPTER IV

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM FOR ELEMENTARY GRADES

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The musical education of the virtually handicapped child should begin as soon as he enters school. For that nearly all homes contain radios most of the children will have had a great deal of pre-school listening experience. Some children come from homes where they have had many kinds of musical experiences. A few will have had no musical experiences at all.

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1. Eleanor M. Thayer, Music, Interpretation through the Elementary Grades. Lessons Dramatizing of Instruments of the Child, Portland: Oregon Educational Convention, 1930, p. 172.

the child should not begin to learn Braille notation until he has a good foundation in literary Braille. There is, then, a period of approximately three years when the child is participating in a general introductory music program. During this time the child can be taught many of the rudiments of music such as different kinds of rhythm, singing rote songs, ear-training, and to play tunes on toy instruments.

Children love to make music together. Use can be made of the rhythm band in the kindergarten and in the first grade. It is possible to use tonettes and other simple instruments for bands in the second grade. The writer experimented one year with a tonette quartette composed of third graders. They learned to play many songs in harmony and often performed for the assembly programs. When they began to study piano as fourth graders they seemed to be better prepared for the instrument than others who had not had this experience.[2]

The child may be given experience with piano even if he has not started to take lessons. If given the opportunity, most children will experiment with the piano just to hear the sounds that they can make. "For children, a piano is a sound-making instrument, not an object to which one transfers notes read from a printed page. Children do not wait to play the piano anymore than they wait to talk until they can read the printed word. In both cases they learn through their ears. When they are old enough, they are only too ready to learn to

2. It was a policy at the South Dakota School to begin piano instruction at the fourth grade level.

The child should not begin to learn music notation until he has a good foundation in literary details. There is, then, a period of approximately three years when the child is participating in a general introductory music program. During this time the child can be taught many of the fundamentals of music such as different kinds of rhythm, singing rote songs, marching, and to play tunes on his instruments.

Children love to make music together. This can be made a fine rhythm band in the kindergarten and in the first grade. It is possible to use tambrels and rhythm instruments for music in the second grade. The writer experimented one year with a bowtie quartette composed of third graders. They learned to play many songs in harmony and often performed for the assembly programs. When they began to study piano as fourth graders they seemed to be better prepared for the instrument than others who had not had this experience.[3]

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3. It was a policy at the South Dakota State School to begin piano instruction at the fourth grade level.

read from the printed page, either in music or in books."[3] The child should be told about how the piano works and be shown the proper care of the instrument. The child will usually leave the hammers and strings alone if he understands their functions and knows that the piano will not play if he harms them. "Children are curious about a piano--all parts of it, inside and out, and nothing else offers them so much fun as exploring it. The piano is, of course, a precious instrument and one cannot afford to have disastrous things happen to it. But there are many things children can find out about its workings, under proper supervision, and not only will no harm be done to the piano, but the children's interest in music will be tremendously enhanced."[4] There are some visually handicapped children who continually manipulate any object to which they have access. The teacher will find it necessary to give them special caution before he can leave such pupils alone with the piano or they will try to take it apart. The writer found that a few reproofs would usually serve to keep the student from damaging the instrument.

The First Year at the Piano

The teacher should not plunge immediately into the teaching of notation the first time the children come for a lesson. The child should be allowed to have some fun with the piano and become acquainted with the instrument before tackling

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3. Emma Dickson Sheehy, <u>There's Music in Children</u>, Henry Holt, New York, p. 32.
4. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 33.

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<u>The First Day at the Piano</u>

The teacher should not plunge immediately into the teaching of notation the first time the children come for a lesson. The child should be allowed to have some fun with the piano and become acquainted with the instrument before handling

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3. Emma Dickson Sheehy, <u>There's Music in Children</u>. Henry Holt, New York, p. 12.
4. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 39.

the rather strenuous task of learning Braille notation. Mursell has expressed this thought.

> Elementary piano instruction, beginning perhaps in the third grade, should, if possible, have its roots in mere tonal play with the instrument, beginning just as soon as the child shows an interest in it.... The first educational use of the piano should not be the difficult and formal business of creating tone patterns on it. It should be treated as an opportunity for free tonal experience. It is a matter of common experience that a child will enjoy sounding tones and groups of tones on the piano, and listening to the effects produced.[5]

Teachers do not appear to agree on the question of whether Braille notation should be introduced before the child works at the piano keyboard, whether the child should become acquainted with the piano and learn short pieces by rote before attempting to learn Braille notation, or whether to teach the keyboard and notation at the same time. Seven teachers indicate that they teach Braille notation before introducing the child to the keyboard. Many of the teachers say that they teach the keyboard and the notation at the same time. A few indicate that the child is given much work at the keyboard before attempting to learn the notation. Jean Poole of the New York Institution of the Education of the Blind has this to say.

> It seems to me that Braille music should not be introduced to children until they are well acquainted with the keyboard, have some rhythmic concepts, and can play a number of simple melodies.[6]

Children who become acquainted with the Braille notation before having work at the keyboard have sometimes learned to

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5. James L. Mursell and Mabelle Glenn, The Psychology of School Music Teaching, Silver Burdette, New York, 1938, pp. 24-25.
6. Response to question 18 of questionnaire.

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> Elementary piano instruction, beginning perhaps in the third grade, should, if possible, have its roots in more visual play with the instrument, beginning just as soon as the child shows an interest in it.... The first educational use of the piano should not be the difficult and formal business of creating good posture on it. It should be treated as an opportunity for free visual experience. It is a matter of common experience that a child will enjoy striking keys and groups of tones on the piano, and listening to the effects produced.[5]

Teachers do not appear to agree on the question of whether Braille notation should be introduced before the child sees the piano keyboard, whether the child should become acquainted with the piano and learn short pieces by rote before proceeding to learn Braille notation, or whether to teach the keyboard and notation at the same time. Some teachers believe that they teach Braille notation before introducing the child to the keyboard. Many of the teachers say that they teach the keyboard and the notation at the same time. A few indicate that the child is given much work at the keyboard before attempting to learn the notation. Some doubt if the new Instruction of the Education of the Blind has time to say.

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Children who become acquainted with the Braille notation before having much at the keyboard have sometimes learned to

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5. James L. Gurnell and Dorothy Gilson, The Teaching of Music, Music Education, Ginn and Company, New York, 1956, pp. 21-23.

6. Response to question 16 of questionnaire.

read it in a singing class. The music department of the New York State School for the Blind has developed a course in musicianship to give the students a better understanding of music. This course is an outgrowth of the feeling that the short amount of time allowed for lessons each week is not ample to cover all of the information which each student should have in order, not only to play the music he is learning, but, what is more important, to understand it as well. Classes in musicianship meet for two twenty-five minute periods per week during elementary grades three to six. All third grade pupils are placed in the elementary class called Musicianship I. There the children take up the elements of music such as rhythm, ear-training, reading and writing of Braille music, scales, and triads. At first they learn to recognize, count, and clap rhythms and then learn the different time values of notes. They learn that music must not only have time but shape, and are taught to think in phrases which question and answer each other. The musical alphabet, finding the white keys on the keyboard, then writing the seven music letters on pegboards in different note values from eighth to whole are introduced. All students are required to have at least one-half year of musicianship before they begin the study of an instrument. Those who completely fail the course are dropped from further musicianship courses after the first year.[7]

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7. Grace T. Towsley and Muriel K. Mooney, "Elementary School Music in the Batavia School for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, pp. 175-176.

read it in a singing class. The music department of the New York State School for the Blind has developed a course in musicianship to give the students a better understanding of music. This course is an outgrowth of the feeling that the short amount of time allowed for lessons each week is not ample to cover all of the information which each student should have in order, not only to play the music he is learning, but, what is more important, to understand it as well. Classes in musicianship meet for two twenty-five minute periods per week during elementary grades three to six. All third grade pupils are placed in the elementary class called musicianship I. There the children take up the elements of music such as rhythm, sar-training, reading and writing of English music, scales, and triads. At first they learn to recognize, count, and clap rhythms and then learn the different time values of notes. They learn that music must not only have time but shape, and are taught to think in phrases which question and answer each other. The musical alphabet, finding the white keys on the key-board, then writing the seven music letters on pegboards in different note values from eighth to whole are introduced. All students are required to have at least one-half year of musicianship before they begin the study of an instrument. Those who completely fail the course are dropped from further musicianship courses after the first year.[7]

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7. Grace T. Jordan and Muriel A. Mooney, "Elementary School Music in the Schools School for the Blind," Eastern Association of Instructors of the Blind, Proceedings Biennial Convention, 1930, pp. 171-174.

About half the teachers make use of class instruction in starting piano students. It seems to be desirable to work with beginning students in a class until they are able to work independently in a practice period. The piano teacher usually does not have time to give more than one lesson a week to each student, and the beginning student is not able to begin to practice by himself for some time. Children enjoy working together in a class, and it gives them an incentive to learn about the piano and experiment with tunes in the presence of other students. For early training in reading and writing Braille notation, for learning how to locate the keys of the piano, and for learning good posture and the proper use of the hands, it seems that the class method should save the teacher a lot of time and that the children would learn faster. The writer used the class method for several weeks with beginning students until individual differences would make it impractical.

The following procedure has been used successfully by the writer in teaching beginning piano students in a class which met every day for several weeks: The class should be small enough so that each student will have ample opportunity to use the keyboard. At first, attention is given to the arrangement of the keys on the keyboard and how to find middle C. The relationship of the other notes of the scale is pointed out. The children are given drills on finding different notes on the piano. This group is very informal and the children are allowed to examine the piano thoroughly and ask questions as they gather around the piano. This instruction often takes

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The following procedure has been used successfully in the writer in teaching beginning piano students in a class period each week day for several weeks: The class should be small enough so that each student will have ample opportunity to use the keyboard. At first, attention is given to the arrangement of the keys on the keyboard and the first middle C. The relationship of the other notes of the scale is pointed out. The children are given drills on finding different notes on the piano. This group is very informal and the children are allowed to examine the piano thoroughly and ask questions as they gather around the piano. This instruction often takes

the form of a game. Each child is expected to go to the piano and find middle C and related keys with no help from the teacher. Children who are able to see the keys are encouraged to sit up straight while finding the notes rather than to get the head close to the keys to see them. Those who cannot see well enough to sit up straight are advised to find the notes by feeling the keys. When the children are able to find their position at the piano with ease, instruction is begun on the proper way to hold the hand and the use of the fingers. They are asked to "play" on the top of the desk or piano to get accustomed to lifting only one finger at a time. Those who have trouble in manipulating the fingers without raising the whole hand are given special help. The next step is to teach little five finger melodies by rote, singing the letter names of the notes as they are being played. After the children have spent considerable time on this sort of work and play method of becoming acquainted with the keyboard, the Braille notation is introduced. The children are asked to bring their slates and styluses when they come to class. They are given the dot numbers of each note and learn to write each of the seven notes of the scale as eighth notes. C is the first note to be learned, then D, E, etc. The notes are always taught in connection with their position on the piano. Children learn quickly when they are allowed to deal with the concrete form of things rather than the abstract. The Braille notation should always be kept as meaningful as is possible. Miss McCuskey brought this out in her thesis with this statement.

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> Too often the study of notation is forced upon the child in settings that are meaningless to him. Great care must be given in teaching the young visually handicapped child to read, as there is always a danger of producing a negative attitude toward not only piano, but the entire subject of music.[8]

At first some children may have trouble in getting the Braille symbol turned around and mistake the C for E, D for the A, and G for the B, but after a short time they usually have no more difficulty. Only one pupil in the writer's experience had considerable difficulty with the notation, but this was the case with everything he did since he did not have a developed sense of rightness and leftness at that time. After the children have learned to recognize the notes, the teacher dictates simple tunes of only a few measures length to be written, read aloud, and played. The teaching of note values is a simple process when the eighth notes have been mastered. After learning how an eighth note is changed to a half or to a two beat note with the addition of dot three and transformed into a whole or a four beat note with the addition of both dots three and six, and making the note have one beat by adding dot six, the child is ready to use the basic piano book. It is suggested to use several sources of material to supplement the basic book since the books which have been transcribed into Braille were written for teaching sighted children and the material is introduced too fast for use with Braille students. Before the Braille student can play any of

8. McCuskey, p. 15.

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6. Heinbaugh, p. 15.

the first ten selections in Thompson's "Teaching Little Fingers to Play," he must have learned about twenty Braille signs in addition to the notes.[9] These signs are, for the most part, completely new and unrelated to anything the child has learned previously in his contacts with Braille. Another objection the writer raises concerning the basic instruction books is that there are too many finger markings given and the child learns to play by recognizing numbers rather than the notes.

Teachers in general favor the rote note approach to teaching piano. This is the method used in Thompson's "Teaching Little Fingers to Play."[10] There are words written with the tunes which are intended to be sung before trying the piece on the keyboard. The note names are also sung and the rhythms are clapped out. In this way the child will know that he is right when he strikes the keys. "The great thing in favor of the rote song approach to piano playing is the fact that the child is enabled to produce music at once, and it is his success in making music at the first lesson that stimulates him to come to the class the next time and the next."[11] "In the beginning the class should begin learning music they are to play by hearing and singing it."[12] "Learning by rote is a stimulus for the beginner. From the very beginning he can play tunes he has learned through singing and takes pride in doing

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9. Teaching Little Fingers to Play, John Thompson's Modern Course for the Piano, Willis, Cincinnati, 1936.
10. Loc. cit.
11. Karl Wilson Gehrkens, Music in the Junior High School, Birchard, Boston, 1934, p. 123.
12. James L. Mursell, Music in American Schools, Silver Burdette, New York, 1943, p. 258.

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12. James L. Mursell, Music in American Schools, Silver Burdette, New York, 1943, p. 238.

so, though the melodies may be elementary and consist of only a few tones."[13]

Teaching Methods and Materials

There are several methods books available for teaching piano to the visually handicapped. These are listed in the Catalog of Music Publications of the American Printing House for the Blind. Thirty-eight teachers indicate that they use the John Thompson Modern Course for Piano. Other methods mentioned were those books by Bernice Frost, Diller and Quaille, Jessie Gaynor, Dingley-Mathews, John Williams, Ella Ketterer, and Dorothy Blake.[14] The Oxford Piano Course and the John Schaum books were mentioned also but these are not available at the American Printing House. The popularity of the Schaum books indicates that this method should be available before long.

The majority of teachers use a combination of several methods to give variety of material and to supplement the basic piano book which usually does not have enough pieces which are applicable to the needs of the Braille students. A few teachers have expressed the feeling that a method book designed for teaching Braille students should be compiled since books which have been intended for the use of seeing students do not give enough instruction which is needed for certain phases of the Braille instruction.

As soon as the child has learned enough Braille notation to be able to read and interpret it fairly well, he is given

13. McCuskey, p. 15.
14. Response to question 20 of the questionnaire.

any single one variables may be elementary and consist of only a few items.[13]

Training Methods and Techniques

There are several methods which facilitate the learning process in the vocational environment. These are listed in the catalog of media capabilities of the American Vocational Guide for the Blind. Entrepreneur training indicates that when the six jobs discovery method proved too slow, other techniques mentioned were those used by Jewish Vocational Service, Milton and Josephine Marcus Gerber, Murphy-Robinson, Inc. Utilization, Job Development, and Placement Plans.[14] The Gerber Class Course and the Job Seekers Guide were mentioned also but these are not available at the American Vocational Guide. The popularity of the Jewish Guide indicates that this method should be available before long.

The majority of respondents use a combination of several methods to give variety of material and to supplement the basic minimum home which usually does not have enough phonic aids are applicable to the needs of the Braille educator. The teachers have accepted the fact that a medical leave between for the Braille students should be available when Braille which have been intended for the use of sighted students do not give enough instruction which is needed for certain phases of the Braille instruction.

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13. Schwartz, op. cit.

14. Teachers in attendance 30 of the guidance.

selections from many different sources to supplement the basic piano method. It seems that the child should be allowed to choose some of the music with which he works from a variety of material. The writer often played several selections of the same difficulty and allowed the child to decide which he would learn. The student seemed to be more interested in the piece and was given the feeling that it was his special selection. Much of the music available in music stores has not been transcribed into Braille and is not listed in the Catalog of Braille Publications. It is therefore necessary for the teacher to transcribe the music himself or dictate it to the pupil.

Location of Middle C and the Position of the Other Keys

One of the very first things the visually handicapped child must learn is to find his position at the piano without the aid of the teacher. For some students who are totally blind this is done with ease while with others it takes time and patience before they are able to approach the piano and sit down to play without fumbling around to find the keys they wish to play. The method that is recommended is a combination of several habits to be formed. If the piano has a keyhole under middle C, that is a help for finding the middle of the keyboard. This is not always reliable since the newer pianos do not have a keyhole. Some children are able to stand in front of the piano and locate the center by placing both hands at the extremities of the keyboard and then bringing them together. Perhaps the best method and the one that looks the

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best is to sit down on the bench and place the feet on the right and left pedals. Then middle C should be directly in front of the student. The hands should then be placed on the keys and the three black or raised keys to the left of middle C found with the left hand and the two black keys to the right of middle C should be found with the right hand. After a little practice the student should always be able to locate middle C as the white note just left of the two black keys under the right hand. One teacher has suggested placing a small piece of adhesive tape in front of middle C until the child can remember the position of the key. Once the child has learned the location of middle C, the other keys on both sides will be easy to learn. It is surprising how many children who have never seen do not know the difference between up and down on the keyboard, or do not know which hand is their right or left. These children will need a little drill in helping them to form these concepts. At first the totally blind child will be expected to use the black keys as guides in finding the notes on the piano in relation to middle C. However, he should be gradually trained to depend on muscle memory as his piano experience continues and be able to find the keys accurately without touching the black keys to any great extent. The sighted person does this all the time while reading music and is able to read and play without watching the keys.

The writer has had only one student who was unable to find his position at the piano by using the above methods. This was a problem because he had no sense of left and rightness

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The writer has had only one student who was unable to find his position at the piano by using the above methods. This was a problem because he had no sense of left and rightness

and could not remember which part of the keyboard was up and which was down. After two years of instruction this child was just learning to go to the piano and begin playing without experimenting with the sound of the notes before locating his position. This condition was not confined to the piano but was apparent in all his work. It is this type of student which demands all the patience and ingenuity the teacher can muster in order to help the child learn to coordinate his hands and mind so that he can play. Many of these children have good musical ears and will develop their talent for playing by ear. All that is possible should be done to help them learn to use the Braille, however.

From the very first the teacher must give the child training in good posture and the elimination of all noticeable mannerisms which may detract from his performance at the piano before an audience. This training should begin when the child is very young so that bad habits will not be continued. The visually handicapped teacher should have a person with sight assist him in detecting mannerisms or "blindisms" of the students when they are performing. The child must always be expected to behave as if he were normal. It always detracts from the performance of a musician to have the audience feel pity towards him because of his actions. One of the most pleasing remarks the writer would hear after a program was, "Why, that child didn't appear to be blind at all." The teacher then feels rewarded for his patience in insisting the child should practice a normal stage appearance. Grace Werntz has stated

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the importance of stage appearance.

> We must constantly emphasize how to appear on the stage, look about the audience, be seated properly, begin to play without fumbling, and how to leave the stage in an easy and gracious manner. Seeing children learn these things mostly by imitation, but blind children must learn them through instruction and constant practice. Of all these things, the one that I find takes the longest to teach, if it is necessary to teach it, is how to find the proper keys and begin playing without the least hesitation. With some students it takes many trials at each of many different lessons.[15]

<u>The Proper Use of Arms, Wrists, Hands, and Fingers</u>

The visually handicapped child must learn to develop a relaxed position at the piano and learn to use his arms, wrists, hands, and fingers correctly. Blind children seem to be prone to muscular tenseness. They stiffen their hands and fingers to the extent that it is almost impossible to get them to drop their fingers onto the keys instead of holding the fingers as if they were sticks. The teacher must spend much time in showing the child how to move the fingers and overcome this tenseness. Talking about the situation is some help, but the child will learn chiefly by imitation of the teacher's movements. The teacher must demonstrate how the hand and fingers are to be used and allow the child to feel the teacher's hand and imitate what he is doing. Some teachers say they mold the child's hand and operate his fingers for him until he is able to relax the muscles. The most frequent suggestion has been to have the child cup his hand with the palm upward as if

15. Grace Werntz, "Junior Music," <u>American Association of Instructors of the Blind</u>, Twenty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1928, pp. 372-373.

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1. Irene Jerome, "Junior Music," Instructor Administration of Instructors of the Blind, Twenty-third Biennial Convention, 1936, pp. 171-172.

he were holding a ball. Then the hand is turned over without changing its shape and the fingers are placed on the keys. The child should be given five-finger exercises to be played with the hand in this position. He must be reminded often to keep the wrist and hand relaxed. The child who has a great deal of difficulty in relaxing his hand and moving his fingers without moving the whole arm must have much help in learning to form the habit of relaxing when he plays. One teacher says she instructs the child to "Sit erect, feet flat on the floor (or box), relax arms, swing arms from shoulders, swing arms from elbows, float elbows, loosen thumbs, let the elbows carry the hands over the keyboard, and then bring the hands and arms down into position."[16] The importance of developing a good position has been expressed by Nan Corriher.

> The importance of early and steady training in the basic problems of piano technique cannot be minimized. The totally blind student, in most instances, can never successfully overcome bad technical habits. His handicap makes it impossible for him to correct technical errors which would be relatively simple for the average sighted student. Therefore, it is important that the instructor of the handicapped student of music make an added effort to instruct the pupil in the correct technical procedure at the very beginning of his piano career.... The problem of touch at the keyboard is vital, since technique without finger and hand development is unthinkable. The blind student often has great difficulty with his hand position. He frequently cultivates the unfortunate habit of extending the hands far back into the black keys of the piano, while attempting to play all types of technical passages. This habit is sometimes formed while the student is learning his notes, and the problem is carried over into the later phases of piano training.
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> Of course, the blind student must have some means of finding his way on the keyboard, however,

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16. Response to question 22 of questionnaire.

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his teacher must be vigilant so as to keep the student from forming a damaging habit during the beginning phases of piano instruction. The student should be encouraged to maintain a desirable hand position at all times in order that he may play legato passages with ease. If the pupil learns to play with curved fingers and relaxed wrists, he will form the correct finger habits, and will likely use the black keys only as a guide in finding his position at the keyboard. Good finger habits can be cultivated by playing scales and five finger passages with a relaxed wrist and legato touch. By avoiding all unnecessary movement and maintaining a quiet hand, clean finger work will come into its own. Looseness is a preliminary condition for good playing even in the performance of little compositions.[17]

Placing the Braille Book

A child will have less trouble with losing his place on the Braille page if he holds the music on his lap while he is playing. If the child places the music on the music rack each time he wishes to play with both hands, the book has a tendency to fall and the pages to turn. If the piano is a grand piano then the music can be laid flat on the piano top. If the child is to hold the music on his lap it is more important than ever that the chair or bench should be the right height for him so the music will not slide off his knees. The child should be encouraged to keep his music in a position where he can read it with either hand while playing with the other.

Teaching the Visually Handicapped Child Who Uses Ink-Print Music

Almost all teachers have some pupils who are sight-saving students and read print music. These students have enough

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17. Nan Corriher, "Teaching Fundamentals of Piano Technique to the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, pp. 160-161.

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Teaching the Visually Handicapped Child the Use Self-Help Skills

Almost all teachers have seen young people who are sight-saving students and read print music. These students have enough

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17. Max Goldfarb, "Teaching Techniques of Piano Technique to the Blind," Journal Association of Instructors of the Blind, Portland Printing Company, 1950, pp. 120-121.

vision that it is possible to teach them with almost the same procedure one would use in teaching children with normal vision. The ink-print music which the teacher uses with sight-saving students should have as large notes as can be found and the notes should be as clear and black as is possible. Some schools enlarge the notes by hand on an enlarged staff. This is a very tedious procedure and the teacher with many students will not have time to enlarge all the music she would like to use. One teacher says she buys paper that is cream colored and unglazed and has the staff lines ruled on according to her specifications. Another teacher uses a "Cado" Flowmaster Pen that is designed for lettering signs. This pen can be used to make large notes rapidly. At the Lighthouse School volunteer transcribers at the school make master copies from which large note music is mimeographed. Mr. Beetz gives this information.

> In regard to the Large Print music I regret that it is impossible for us to supply this material to those who are not studying at our own Music School. We have made a strong effort to obtain permission from music publishers to provide large print music for all those who are visually handicapped, but up until at present we have not obtained their consent. We, therefore, supply large print music only to our own students who return the copies when they have memorized the pieces.[18]

The visually handicapped teacher who teaches students who use ink-print notation should have a thorough understanding of ink-print notation. Mrs. Sonora I. Rieder who has been teaching sighted pupils for many years made the following comments:

18. Charles J. Beetz, Letter to writer, October 19, 1953.

vision that it is possible to teach them with almost the same procedure one would use in teaching children with normal vision. The ink-print music which the teacher uses with right-seeing students should have as large notes as can be found and the notes should be as clear and black as is possible. Some schools enlarge the notes by hand on an enlarged staff. This is a very tedious procedure and the teacher with many students will not have time to enlarge all the music she would like to use. One teacher says she buys paper that is cross ruled and enlarged and has the staff lines ruled on according to her specifications. Another teacher uses a "Gem" Stencograph pen that is designed for lettering signs. This pen can be used to make large notes readily. At the Lighthouse School volunteer transcribers at the school make master copies from which large note music is mimeographed. Mr. Beck gives this information.

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The visually handicapped teacher who teaches students who use ink-print notation should have a thorough understanding of ink-print notation. Mrs. Bruce I. Fisher who has been teaching sighted pupils for many years gives the following comments:

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1. Charles S. Beck, letter to writer, October 17, 1951.

> I never teach anything unless I have memorized it completely. I would never have attempted teaching as a profession without having as thorough knowledge of all ink-print reading as possible. I believe that knowledge of staff notation is absolutely necessary.[19]

Lucille Mahon who has been teaching music for many years in schools for the visually handicapped has this to say about sight-saving.

> The sight-saving work which has been in existence in our school for three years will, I feel, prove to be a great advantage to our department. We have a special teacher for the sight-saving group. With specially lighted practice rooms and studio these pupils are able to read print music with comparative ease. Many students of the past might have done excellent work under the present arrangement. In this connection I always think of an Overbrook friend who had considerable vision. She struggled along with Braille music for years, and with the help of her classmates, learning two or three compositions a year. As she grew older, she became almost desperate about her work. Finally, the year before graduation, she asked her teacher to permit her to try print music. The teacher reluctantly consented. The girl's progress was amazing. She had gone from darkness into light. After leaving school, she continued the study of music, and now my friend is one of the most successful teachers of her state.[20]

John Meldrum of the Oklahoma School feels that a better method could be devised for teaching staff notation to visually handicapped students who wish to teach sighted pupils.

> With the introduction of sight-saving classes in residential schools, it becomes necessary for us to teach music from the staff in many instances. Since such students have been brought up on Braille notation, and since a knowledge of the staff is imperative to those who expect to teach the seeing,

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19. Sonora I. Rieder, Letter to writer, July 17, 1953.
20. Lucille Mahon, "The Importance of Music in Schools for the Blind," <u>American Association of Instructors of the Blind</u>, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 168.

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19. Romona J. Fisher, Letter to writer, July 17, 1959.
20. Lucille Mahon, "The Importance of Music in Schools for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 160.

> we should like to see a text on staff notation made available in Braille. The Manual of Staff Notation in Music by Edwin L. Gardiner is excellent to demonstrate notation usage in tactile form, but we need something more fundamental, more in detail.[21]

It is quite a problem for the visually handicapped teacher to have a student who uses ink-print music if the teacher has not had training in teaching staff notation. Some teachers have expressed the opinion that all Braille students of piano should be given lessons in staff notation.

The writer had only one student whose vision was such that he could be classed as a sight-saving student. This boy was using Braille music when the writer first began to teach him. Permission was received to let the boy use ink-print music, and he discarded the Braille notation. In the four years the boy worked with ink-print music he became quite adept at reading it, and he went far ahead of the other students. This boy preferred to practice at the grand piano so he could draw the music rack close to his eyes. Under modified lighting conditions he was able to read quite well although it is not likely that he would ever be able to do rapid sight reading.

Many of the teachers of sight-saving pupils feel the need of a means of getting large print music for use in teaching. At present there is very little of this music on the market, and teachers must prepare their own music. This problem of procuring large type music is one that needs study to work out a practical solution.

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21. John Meldrum, "How May Music Education in Schools for the Blind be Made Functional," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 171.

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21. John Feldman, "How May Music Education in Schools for the Blind be Made Functional," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 171.

CHAPTER V

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PIANIST

The Importance of Training the Ear

Perhaps the greatest difference between the sighted piano student and the visually handicapped student is the method by which they learn their music. For the sighted student this is a process of developing the ability to read and perform simultaneously since the pianist is in great demand to play much music "at sight" in playing accompaniments without prior practice. When the sighted student memorizes music, he is able to read and play the parts of a selection over and over by sight-reading the music. He is able,after years of practice in reading, to take in the whole musical structure of a selection by the use of his visual sense. On the other hand, the visually handicapped student must develop the ability to assimilate the music quickly; he is expected to play largely by the use of his aural sense. He must be able to read the Braille notation, or in the case of the sight-saver, the ink-print notation, well, but accuracy and understanding are more important than speed. When the student has completed the first two years of training in reading Braille notation he will have learned almost all of the signs that he will need to know for the rest of his life. The visually handicapped person who uses ink-print music will probably never be able to read rapidly

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since he can usually read only a small part of a measure at once and will be able to sight-read only with difficulty. The use of notation, then, is primarily an aid to memorization and it is the student's ear that must be developed. The use of the aural sense in memorizing is of paramount importance. The visually handicapped person who does not possess a good ear is greatly handicapped in his ability to develop an extensive repertoire. Those students who have difficulty in using the ear may improve through a course in ear training. "Hearing is the very center of musicianship. No one thing so surely favors the rapid progress of the beginner, or lays a better foundation for speedy and continuing development of musical and technical powers than training him to hear well."[1] The successful visually handicapped pianist must have developed the ability to learn music in the quickest possible way. "It is interesting to know how Alec Templeton assimilates his large repertoire of standard and popular music. He does it mostly by ear and sometimes verifies the text with the help of the Braille edition. He listens to phonograph records and his keen ear identifies almost immediately the complexities of the harmony and the play of the inner voices."[2] It is important that the teacher give the student extensive training in memorizing music by listening. One of the most effective methods

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1. James L. Mursell, Music in American Schools, Silver Burdette, New York, 1943, p. 143.
2. Maurice Dumesnil, "A New Genius Who Does Not See," Etude, LVII (July, 1939), 433-434.

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is to use two pianos. The teacher plays a phrase, and then the student imitates what he hears. This method is used often by the writer in teaching music that has to be learned quickly. Of course, this takes longer than one lesson period a week will allow and time must be provided in the schedule.

"Emphasis must be laid on ear training, for, abundant as Braille music may be or may become, the blind musician will always need to learn much music by having it played for him. Some prefer to acquire all their pieces in this way, but the method is likely to leave many details unrevealed. Yet, if it is true, as has been said, that memorizing by ear is too often a lazy procedure, it is quite as often a necessary one, and for this reason a great deal of stress should be laid on ear training in schools for the blind. It is safe to estimate that about half of all music memorized by professional blind musicians is acquired by ear."[3] The student who expects to play for church will find the ability to memorize rapidly by ear a great asset. "He should be able to memorize rapidly by ear; for the latter two pianos or an organ and a piano are necessary tools. Memorizing by ear should be taught in schools for the blind just as thoroughly as we teach memorizing from Braille."[4]

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3. L. W. Rodenburg, "Braille Music Memorizing," Outlook for the Blind, XXIV (1930), 27.
4. John Meldrum, "The Blind Musician as Church Organist and Choir Director," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1948, p. 165.

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5. C. V. Longhurst, "Braille Music Memorizing," Outlook for the Blind, July (1930), 27.

6. John Vickers, "The Blind Musician as Church Organist and Choir Director," American Association of Instructors of the Blind Bulletin, Twenty-sixth Biennial Convention, 1940, p. 140.

"The importance of training the ear from the start cannot be over-emphasized. All piano study should have ear training as its basis. Too often the study of piano for the blind starts and ends with the Braille page, when after all, music is concerned with hearing and feeling."[5] Many teachers express the opinion that the schools should concentrate upon the learning of music by reading Braille. This is, of course, very important, but even while the students are perfecting the skills of reading Braille notation they should be preparing for the time when they will be away from the school and will find it necessary to learn much music by ear and rote if they wish to continue the building of their repertoire. "Rote teaching, as well as reading from notation, should continue even through high school. Many blind adults learn this way after leaving the supervision of the teacher."[6] The teacher must remember that Braille music is really only an aid to memorization; the Braille notation should not be thought of as an end itself. The child should have a thorough knowledge of the notation, but the ability to memorize by hearing music is very important.

In response to the question, "Do you allow the child to hear the selection before he begins to learn it from the Braille?" eighteen teachers indicate that they almost always allow the child to hear the music first, sixteen say they allow the child to hear it some of the time, two play only for the

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5. McCuskey, p. 19.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

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5. McCuskey, p. 19.
6. Ibid., p. 16.

advanced students, and one says she does it only for beginners. Eight teachers reply that they never play the selection that a student is expected to learn for fear he would learn it by ear rather than by the use of the Braille notation. The writer almost without exception plays the piece for the student before he tries to learn it from the Braille. This helps the child to know where the phrases begin and end, what the result would be if sharps and flats are left out, and to create interest in the selection. The student rarely tries to bluff his way through a piece because he has tried to learn it entirely from ear memory rather than from the notation. There are a few students who apparently are unable to learn from the Braille notation who have a talent for learning by ear and rote. "Most of us would probably condemn an unnecessary use of the aural method, and at the same time would envy those who are so endowed as to make the most use of it. Like all other practices, it may be cultivated, and certainly no odium is attached. It should be an accomplishment, not a habit."[7]

John Meldrum is a firm believer that the student should be assisted in his memorization by hearing the music played before learning it from the Braille notation. Here are some of his statements on this subject.

> Pieces should be outlined and played through for the students, when assigned. To refuse this help is to add an extra difficulty to the already doubly handicapped student. To refuse to play through a newly assigned piece is not only an unmusical approach, but it denies to the blind or

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7. Rodenburg, p. 27.

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7. Rodenberg, p. 57.

partially blind student the opportunity to sense in advance the style and structure of the piece he is about to learn. Everyone knows that the intelligent seeing student sight-reads a new composition several times before attempting to memorize it. Thus, he learns to memorize by absorption and develops the ability to learn phrasewise.[8]

I think it utterly silly to refuse to allow a blind student to hear a composition he is about to memorize from Braille. Any sighted child who is studying with a competent teacher is given this extra help and, if the teacher does not play the piece for him, he can sight-read it for himself. Why add another handicap to our students by refusing them this pleasurable and profitable experience.[9]

Mr. Meldrum's beliefs are shared by Mr. Meyers.

For a pupil who memorizes well from the written page it should not be so difficult to learn a piece by hearing it played. There are some teachers who would not think of playing over a piece for a pupil before he had learned it. I think this is all right in the case of a lazy pupil who has a good ear and who expects the teacher to do all the work. But there is no doubt that a student finds it easier to memorize something after he has heard it played. There is surely no virtue in prolonging the time it takes to commit to memory.[10]

Mr. Rodenburg also feels that the student is benefited by hearing the music which he is expected to learn.

Before memorizing a piece the learner if possible should have it played for him several times. For the pupil it stimulates interest, while for the advanced learner it sketches the composition and is a kind of observation-memorizing.[11]

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8. John Meldrum, "How May Music Education in Schools for the Blind be Made More Functional," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 171.
9. John Meldrum, Letter to writer, October 18, 1953.
10. Frederick G. Meyers, "Methods of Ear Training Conducive to Better Memorization," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-fourth Biennial Convention, 1938, pp. 79-80.
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8. John Holdrum, "How my music education in Schools for the Blind be made more functional," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1939, p. 171.
9. John Hayes, letter to writer, October 16, 1953.
10. Frederick S. Hayes, "Methods of the Teaching Concerts to Better Musicians," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-fourth Biennial Convention, 1930, pp. 29-30.
11. Rotenberg, p. 27.

To quote Mr. Meyers again

> A good ear is pretty much a gift. It is easy for some to play by ear (faking, we call it). With some, this is all they have. In itself it is not sufficient, but coupled with other desirable mental, physical, spiritual, and personal qualities, it may prove of great value. I should say, let us not discourage it. Let us be thankful for whatever equipment a pupil may possess, and let us try to help him develop it, so that he may use it--whenever and however he can.[12]

The piano teacher should give each student as much work in ear training as is possible. The schedule may not allow each school to conduct a class in ear training or musicianship as has been developed by Miss Towsley and Miss Mooney of the New York State School for the Blind,[13] but even so, the teacher may devote a few minutes of each lesson to giving the student training in the recognition of intervals, chords, and keys. It is very desirable for the music department to schedule at least a year of harmony in high school so that students who expect to continue their music education will have a knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts of harmony.

The writer had the experience of working with a boy who had a talent for playing by ear and memorizing by rote. He had taken piano lessons for several years while in the grades but dropped formal training in piano upon reaching high school. This boy became interested in doing accompaniments for the writer when the latter had singing engagements. The boy did a commendable job. The difficult portions of the accompaniments

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12. Meyers, _op. cit._, p. 80.
13. Towsley and Mooney, pp. 175-176.

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12. Rogers, op. cit., p. 50.
13. Fowler and Rooney, pp. 175-176.

were learned by rote, that is, the writer would play the part while explaining the chordal structure. Then the boy would play it. This boy spent many hours working out the songs that he wished to play and developed a pleasing style of his own.

"A blind student who wishes to do church work must be able to transpose hymns and chants 'at sight' so to speak. For training in this aspect of the work a good course in keyboard harmony is indispensible and should be offered in the music department of every school for the blind."[14] This is also true of any person who expects to do accompanying of any type. The writer would encourage students to play accompaniments in several keys instead of sticking to a favorite key for all kinds of playing. For example, on an occasion when the writer was expected to sing "The Lord's Prayer" by Malotte accompanied by a blind pianist and only a short time was allowed for practice, it was discovered that the pianist had never played the selection in the key of B flat. In a few minutes she was able to transpose the music into the new key and play it perfectly.

Most of the teachers indicate that they give their students instruction in keyboard harmony from the very first as soon as the students are able to grasp the fundamental concepts of harmony. Certainly no teacher should slight this phase of the development of the student. This training can begin in the

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14. John Meldrum, "The Blind Musician as Church Organist and Choir Director," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1948, p. 165.

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14. John [illegible], "The Blind Musician as Church Organist and Choir Director," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1948, p. 165.

first weeks of instruction with an understanding of the different keys in which the pieces are written. The visually handicapped child who learns Braille notation must necessarily learn the number of sharps and flats in the different keys since the key signature is formed by indicating the number of sharps or flats. He must know that two flats indicate B flat and E flat and that the key is B flat, etc.

Fig. 8

Braille Key Signatures

Flat Keys

F Bb Eb Ab Db Gb Cb

Sharp Keys

G D A E B F# C#

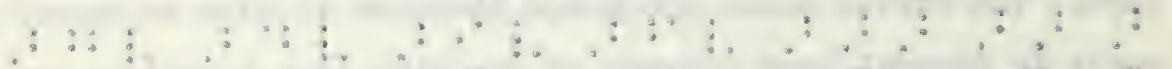
The ability to recognize and play all types of chords as either solid or broken chords must be mastered by all students. Since the chords in Braille notation are written as intervals it is necessary from the first to know that the tonic chord in the keys of C is written C, third interval, fifth interval; and played as C, E, and G. A first inversion is written E, third interval, fourth interval, and is played as E, G, and C. The second inversion is written G, fourth interval, and third interval; and played as G, C, and E. Since the Braille chordal notation is based on this principle it should be quite easy to teach the pupils to transpose from one key to another. For the advanced student, much work should be given in transposing

first weeks of instruction with an understanding of the different ways in which the pieces are written. The visually handicapped child who learns Braille notation must necessarily learn the number of sharps and flats in the different keys since the key signature is formed by indicating the number of sharps or flats. He must know that two flats indicate B flat and E flat and that the key is B flat, etc.

Fig. 5

Braille Key Signatures

Flat Keys



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hymns and simple songs into different keys. Mr. Meldrum has expressed this thought.

> We have a strong feeling that keyboard harmony is far more beneficial to blind students than written harmony and try to blend these two methods with emphasis on the former.[15]

The student should get a thorough training in scale and chord construction, on the keyboard, not away from it.

Advanced Braille Notation

When the student has completed the training in reading Braille notation that is necessary for the work in elementary piano study, he will have learned very nearly all the notation that he will need to know for ordinary Braille reading. Whenever he comes to a sign that he does not know he should not skip over it because then he will not get the full meaning of the music. Possibly one of the hardest things for students to understand and interpret is the notation used for writing in-accords. When one hand plays two or more melodies or parts at once, the note-values of which are unlike and cannot be written as a chord, each part is written as a separate measure and these are linked by the in-accord sign. The student must have a complete understanding of note values and rests in order to understand the in-accord writing which can be very complicated. It seems that the student should have a key to the Braille notation to use as a reference in interpreting notation with

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15. John Maldrum, "How May Music Education in Schools for the Blind be Made Functional," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Norfolk: Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 172.

which he has difficulty. These are available at the American Printing House for the Blind. The student should certainly become acquainted with the use of these keys to notation if he intends to teach piano.

Teaching Staff Notation

"It is important to remember that the blind can read music without having any knowledge of the musical staff used by sighted persons. If they learn the staff it is only because it is referred to so often in books on music or because they wish to teach sighted persons and need to be conversant with both systems of musical notation."[16] It is very necessary that the visually handicapped person who wishes to teach should have a thorough knowledge of both Braille and staff notation. This is especially true if he expects to teach sighted children. "In addition to Braille notation for personal use, the student should have an intimate knowledge of staff notation and terminology that he may think and speak the language of his seeing associates."[17] Since it is difficult to give totally blind students a thorough understanding of staff notation without some graphic means of presenting the elements of the staff, Mr. Charles J. Beetz, who is the director of the Lighthouse Music School, invented the Beetz Notation Graph. The writer received his description of the device as follows:

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16. Robert Sabin, "The Lighthouse School; Music for Blind Students," *Musical America*, LXXII (May, 1952), 25.
17. Harry J. Ditzler, "Does Popular Music Rate Curricular Attention," *American Association of Instructors of the Blind*, Thirty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1948, p. 165.

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> I wish to say that the apparatus consists of a cork base upon which the staff lines and clefs are mounted. All other symbols used in music notation are supplied with the set and may be fastened upon the staves at will. The staff and all the symbols are made of wire to which pins have been soldered. The original purpose of the Notation Graph was to find a way for the blind teacher to instruct classes of seeing students, so as to use the Graph as a sighted teacher uses the blackboard. At present, the schools for the blind throughout the United States are using the Notation Graph to acquaint their music students with the system of music notation used by the seeing. Many individual teachers are also using the apparatus in their private teaching. In that case it is a most convenient device for a blind teacher to use to acquaint his seeing students with the staff and the various characters used in notation. It is very important for the teacher to have something tangible to aid him in explaining the meaning of the symbols and to acquaint the student with musical terminology. When a student once knows the names of the lines and spaces, so that he knows them by number, such as first line, first space, second line, etc., the teacher no longer needs the help of the Notation Graph in his teaching.[18]

The teacher can use the Beetz Notation Graph to set up examples of staff notation which the student may "see" with his fingers. He can find out how the difference in time values is represented by feeling of the individual notes. If the teacher attempts to tell the student how the notes are arranged on the staff, he has a hard time getting him to understand; but if he can feel the notes and the lines, the student can readily visualize how the staff notation works.

Another method of teaching staff notation is the use of the "Manual of the Staff Notation" by Edwin L. Gardiner. This book contains the various symbols used in staff notation

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18. Charles J. Beetz, Personal letter to the writer, October 19, 1953.

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15. Charles J. Dentz, personal letter to the writer, October 19, 1955.

embossed in a raised form that the blind person can feel to see how they are used. Each page of illustrations is accompanied by a page in Braille describing the use of the symbols. The book is written in grade one and one-half Braille and is available at the Howe Memorial Press, Watertown, Massachusetts.

The need for teaching both the Braille notation and the staff notation has been discussed by C. Walter Wallace.

> Since institutions for the blind emphasize the study of music and train their pupils according to the Braille method, without taking the ink-print system of notation into consideration, the students graduate with only the Braille idea in mind, and the blind musician is confronted at once with the problem of securing new music. When he has the opportunity to accept a position such as church organist or teaching piano to sighted children, he is up against a serious obstacle, that is, to understand the music sighted people use. He knows nothing of the two staves, of how the notes are placed or written, of the rests nor the clef signs, nor how signatures are shaped and placed. All he knows is the Braille system. Schools which do not teach the sighted musical notation to their students should do so without delay. Let the two systems go hand in hand, and when the student graduates he will know all about the sighted notation, how to procure new music, how to have a sighted dictator read the music according to their system, and he then can translate it into Braille for his own use. He will know how to teach the sighted pupil, be able to tell where certain notes are located on their staves, how they are written accurately, and, in short, he must be able to talk about it just as though he could see the notes. He must be able to explain the differences in value between whole notes, half notes, and the dead black notes. The only way for him to learn to understand the sighted notation is in school.[19]

19. C. Walter Wallace, "Why Are Blind Musicians Not More Successful," Outlook for the Blind, XXX (1936), 29-30.

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19. C. Walter Wallace, "Why Are Blind Musicians Not More Numerous?" Outlook for the Blind, XIX (1925), 27-30.

Practicing and Memorizing

For the visually handicapped student, practicing and memorizing go hand in hand. He must memorize as he practices. He cannot practice what he has not memorized. For the advanced student practice is concerned mostly with the development of the repertoire. Some teachers do not advocate practice of technical exercises at all except when difficulties are found in a particular selection to be memorized. Alec Templeton feels that practice should always have a definite objective. He has expressed this idea as follows:

> The first step in practicing is to determine exactly why we're doing it at all. There are times when the best of us may be guilty of practicing simply for a good lesson; but that isn't too helpful. At other times we practice to master a specific difficulty in some specific composition, but this is eventually cleared up. Most commonly we think we are practicing when we're merely drilling technique which is a mistake, since practice and technical practice are by no means the same thing. None of the answers quite fits the case until we discover the reason for practicing is the development of musicianship. From the very start, you practice musicianship by making music; each scale, each drill should be brought within the domain of music. I have always held my hands in whatever way feels comfortable and natural. No two pairs of hands are built alike, and each must follow the needs of its individual structure. I have never practiced technique and I have an uneasy feeling when I hear it advocated. Certainly, technique must be developed, but never as a thing apart. The moment you try to separate it from music you get lost. Thus, the simplest scales can be practiced with an ear to tone, touch, the flowing of one note into the next, shadings, and dynamics. I always make up my own exercises and I try to relate them to music. The curse of "exercises," I think, lies in their being both difficult and dull; thus, I try to make mine just difficult enough to cover the point in

Conclusion and Interpretation

For the visually handicapped student, practicing and memorizing is hard in band. He must memorize as he practices. He cannot practice what he has not memorized. For the advanced student practice is concerned mostly with the development of the repertoire. Some students do not actually practice of technical exercises as all except some difficulties are found in a particular selection to be conquered. Also Tonkiewicz feels that practice should always have a definite objective, if has accomplished this task as follows:

The first step in practicing is to determine exactly why we're doing it at all. There was time when the best of us may be guilty of practicing simply for a good lesson; but that isn't too helpful. At other times we practice to master a specific difficulty in some specific accomplishment, but this is eventually derived so. Most commonly, or rather we are operating when we're merely refining techniques which is a mistake. Here practice and technical practice are to be taken by some point. Then, or the lessons notes only the case until it improve the practice the practicing is the development of principles. Then, the next step, the practice musicianship [illegible] each part, and still should be [illegible] the sense of music. I have always had to [illegible] my [illegible] and [illegible]. The [illegible] of [illegible] is still [illegible], and [illegible] the [illegible] of its individual elements. There were [illegible] and [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. Practicing, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. The [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

question without being too distressing, and also to make them interesting as music.[20]

It seems that all practicing should have a definite goal. Scales should not be practiced just for the sake of learning to play all the scales, but to learn the key relationships and the methods of fingering that are most adaptable to playing of scale passages in compositions. The Hanon finger exercises should not be practiced just for the sake of learning one finger pattern after the other, but to strengthen weak fingers and to develop the freedom of fingering that permits rapid legato playing.

The ability to memorize quickly and accurately is of utmost importance for the visually handicapped person. He must be able to read notation rapidly and correctly and know what each sign means. He should develop the ability to read with either hand so that he can play and read at the same time. There are two general methods employed by the visually handicapped person in learning to play particular selections on the piano. One may be called the reading and playing method and the other the memorizing and playing method. The reading and playing method involves the reading of the Braille notation with one hand while playing on the instrument with the other. The signs to be played with the right hand are read with the left; and the signs to be played with the left hand are read with the right. The student either reads and plays a phrase at a time or a

20. Alec Templeton, "Exercises in Musicianship," Etude, LXI (March, 1953), 9.

question without being too distressing, and also to make them interesting as music.[20]

It seems that all practicing should have a definite goal. Scales should not be practiced just for the sake of learning to play all the scales, but to learn the key relationships and the methods of fingering that are most adaptable to playing of scale passages in compositions. The Hanon finger exercises should not be practiced just for the sake of learning one finger pattern after the other, but to strengthen weak fingers and to develop the freedom of fingering that permits rapid legato playing.

The ability to memorize quickly and accurately is of utmost importance for the visually handicapped person. He must be able to read notation rapidly and correctly and know what each sign means. He should develop the ability to read with either hand so that he can play and read at the same time. There are two general methods employed by the visually handicapped person in learning to play particular selections on the piano. One may be called the reading and playing method and the other the memorizing and playing method. The reading and playing method involves the reading of the Braille notation with one hand while playing on the instrument with the other. The signs to be played with the right hand are read with the left; and the signs to be played with the left hand are read with the right. The student either reads and plays a phrase at a time or a

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20. Alma Templeton, "Exercises in Musicianship," *Ideas*, 1961 (March, 1953), 2.

measure. After he has played both hands separately until he can play without reading, he puts both hands together and plays until he has memorized both parts correctly and is ready to go to the next measure or phrase. In the memorizing and playing method the student reads the phrase or measure over several times, noting the time values of notes and the order in which the notes come. Then he plays with both hands at once and tries to reproduce what he has read until he has learned the whole phrase or measure. The average pupil probably uses a combination of both methods depending upon the character of the selection. In learning a selection such as a Bach Prelude and Fugue it is necessary to follow the voice leading of the various parts and then put them together after each voice has been memorized.

Students often ask if they must use the fingering that is indicated by the arranger of the composition. Usually there is a definite purpose for fingering a passage in a certain way, and it seems that the performer should attempt to use the fingering that is indicated. But if the student can devise a better way of fingering it seems that he should be allowed to adapt his own fingering. Often the student's hand will not permit the use of fingering that calls for large hands, and it becomes necessary to revise the fingering. Most of the teachers indicate that they allow the student to adapt his own fingering if the indicated fingering is not conducive to his hand formation.

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"The necessity to memorize has kept thousands of blind persons from becoming musicians. Its drudgery has lessened the enjoyment of music by many more. Also it has driven hundreds upon hundreds to improvise in an untrained way and has thus greatly lowered the standard of musicianship among the blind."[21] It seems that each person has his own difficulties in memorizing. Many are poor memorizers because they are not able to read Braille accurately; others do not study the characteristics of the composition to see how it should be taken apart and practiced with the view of building one part upon another; many students do not listen for the flow of the music, but go at the business in a mechanical manner. Usually the student who reads Braille well and understands the notation and listens carefully to the flow of melody and rhythm as he connects the passages of the composition will have little trouble with memorization. He must be diligent and have the patience to work for perfection in his playing. He should have the structure of the composition well in mind before he begins his practice and also should have heard it played several times so that he knows what the outcome will be.

The student who has lost his vision after having had piano instruction as is taught to the sighted students usually has an adjustment to make before he can continue his work in piano. It is often difficult for him to become accustomed to reading of Braille notation since he has not had several years of training in reading literary Braille. Karsten Ohnstad who

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21. Rodenburg, p. 27.

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21. [illegible], p. 27.

lost his vision while he was in high school tells of his difficulties with piano in his book "The World At My Finger-tips."

> There was no resemblance whatever between the sheets of Braille music which the instructor gave me and the black notes and lined staff of the printed music to which I was accustomed. In the Braille music, the letters of the alphabet were used--A B C D E F G, etc. A sign such as SH placed before D would indicate sharp. There were dozens of such signs for every sort of term, running all the way through the musical dictionary. Learning a selection with Braille music was infinitely slower than looking at a printed score. Every note had to be memorized. I sat before the piano with the Braille music on my lap and ran my finger over the dots until I had memorized several measures for the right hand. Each time I had memorized five or six notes, I had to take my hand from the paper and tap the notes out on the keyboard, then return my hand to the music again and find my place. The same process was repeated for the left hand. When I had memorized an equal number of measures for each hand, I put both hands on the keyboard and put the two halves together. Other students who were more adept at reading Braille than I ran the finger of one hand over the dots and played the piano with the other, first the right hand on the music and then the left. I tried to read the notes with my left index finger but it went too discouragingly slow.[22]

One of the best piano students the writer instructed was a girl who lost most of her vision just before entering high school. She was a slow but careful reader and had a great deal of patience. After graduating from high school she went on to college and is continuing her music education.

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22. Karsten Ohnstad, The World At My Fingertips, Bobbs-Merrill, New York, 1942, pp. 108-109.

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12. Helen Keller, The World at My Fingertips, Doubleday, Doran, New York, 1942, pp. 108-109.

CHAPTER VI

THE VOCATIONAL PREPARATION OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED PIANIST

Vocational Possibilities for Visually Handicapped Pianists

Many of the students of piano will never be able to sell their musical knowledge or skill after graduating from the school for the blind. For those who have the ability and the ambition to compete with sighted musicians there are many job opportunities open for the visually handicapped pianist. Many have become successful teachers of both sighted and visually handicapped students. There are perhaps many more opportunities for teaching sighted children than for teaching those who have visual handicaps. In the entertainment field many have been well received by playing in dance bands and orchestras, some have had successful radio programs, and others have made money playing in night clubs and similar places. A few blind pianists have done successful work in the concert field. Churches which use a liturgical form of service often employ visually handicapped organists. The opportunity for visually handicapped students to return to schools for the blind as teachers is limited since most states have only one school and employ only a few piano teachers.

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Giving Advanced Students an Opportunity To Do Practice Teaching

Only a few schools give their advanced piano students any opportunity to teach other students. Since graduates who do not plan to go on to college have no further chance to train themselves for teaching after graduation from school, most of them would hesitate to teach piano if they had no practical experience in teaching sighted children while they were students in the schools for the visually handicapped. Since there is little chance that the graduate will have the opportunity to teach visually handicapped children, he should have some experience in teaching a sighted child. The student should also have a thorough knowledge of staff notation and all the problems which a sighted child may have in reading music.

The Oklahoma School for the Blind has developed a teacher training course. The writer asked Mr. Meldrum to explain how it operates.

> Our teacher training course requires that students teach a sighted pupil from the city of Muskogee for two years. Two lessons are given each week and a third period is used for pedagogical discussion and for the solution of whatever current problems may arise during the lessons. I supervise the lessons, but am not present constantly while the student teacher is giving instruction. It seems to me that such a course can be of great value to a prospective teacher and, in the case of our students, it seems to me wise to give it on the high school level. Whatever practice teaching pupils may be given later is simply additional training in the right direction. Many of our students are unable to go beyond high school in their music work.[1]

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1. John Meldrum, Personal letter to writer, October 18, 1953.

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The Oklahoma School for the Blind has developed a teacher training course. The writer asked Mr. Holman to explain how it operates.

> Our teacher training course requires that students teach a sighted child from the city of Muskogee for two years. No lessons are given each week and a hour period is used for pedagogical discussion and for the solution of whatever current problems may arise during the lessons. I observe the lessons, but do not present themselves while the student teacher is giving instruction. It seems to me that such a course can be of great value to a prospective teacher and, in the case of our students, it seems to be wise to give it on the high school level. Whatever practice teaching public may be given later is simply additional training in the right direction. Many of our students are unable to go beyond high school in their music work.[1]

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1. John Holman, Personal letter to writer, October 16, 1953.

The visually handicapped student who expects to become a music teacher must be ready for hard work. "Don't encourage any blind person to teach music unless he is a real worker."[2] Even if the individual expects to go back to his home town where people know him and will give him encouragement in getting parents to send their children to him for lessons, he must expect to give the students instruction that will be on a par with that of a sighted instructor, and he should strive to do even better. He should always be fully prepared for any questions that might come up and be able to meet every situation that may arise. This will involve a great deal of concentration and study, but always being fully prepared will pay dividends in encouraging pupils to remain with him. "The blind musician must always be prepared to meet the same demands as those made on the seeing. He should never expect to receive special consideration on account of his handicap, though this may often be accorded him. A blind person should never take pity or sympathy into consideration for securing work."[3] The visually handicapped person must rid himself of any self-consciousness about his handicap and never show that he is sensitive about it. He will be dealing with children who will be very curious about his handicap, and they will ask questions that can prove embarrassing to the person who is trying to cover

2. Sonora L. Rieder, Personal letter to writer, July 17, 1953.
3. Ernest A. Whitfield, "Thoughts for Blind Musicians," Outlook for the Blind, XXX (1936), 140.

The visually handicapped student who expects to become a music teacher must be ready for hard work. "Don't encourage any blind person to teach music unless he is a real worker,"[2] even if the individual succeeds in go back to his home town where people know him and will give his encouragement in getting pupils to send their children to him for lessons, he must expect to give the standard instruction that will be on a par with that of a sighted instructor, and he should strive to do even better. He should always be fully prepared for any questions that might come up and be able to meet every situation that may arise. This will involve a great deal of concentration and study, but always being fully prepared will pay dividends in encouraging people to remain with him. "The blind musician must always be prepared to meet the same demands as those made on the sighted. He should never expect to receive special consideration on account of his handicap, though one may often be accorded him. A blind person should never take pity or sympathy into consideration for a lasting work."[3] The visually handicapped person must ~~the~~ discard of any self-conscious concerns about his handicap and never show that he is sensitive about it. He will be dealing with children who will be very curious about his condition, and they will ask questions that one finds embarrassing to the person who is trying to cover

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1. Louise J. Pimmer, Personal letter to writer, July 17, 1953.
2. Irvant A. Whitfield, "Concerts for Blind Musicians," Teachers for the Blind, XXX (1952), 190.

up his handicap. Once the children accept his handicap they will practically forget that he is different. The person who expects to become a teacher of sighted children must be meticulously careful of his personal appearance at all times. There is no excuse for untidy clothing, uncleanliness, and mismated clothing. If the person is not sure about his attire he should ask a sighted person to help him. He must learn to keep his teaching room clean and know where every article is kept. In short, he cannot afford to let his handicap be detrimental to his success. "People without sight do not realize that they are constantly under observation. It is our duty to prepare them for a seeing world and how to conduct themselves in it. Teachers of the blind must cover a much larger field than teachers of the seeing."[4] The visually handicapped person must eliminate any peculiarities which he has developed that might detract from his personality. These "blindisms" are often not apparent to the blind teacher, and a sighted person should be consulted in eliminating such idiosyncrasies. If the student has physical ailments such as pimples, bad breath, unsightly teeth, or unsightly eyes, he should try to get them corrected. The person with eyes which are disagreeable looking should wear dark glasses.

As the previous paragraph indicates, teachers of the visually handicapped must teach their students much more than

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4. Elinor Louise Schmidt, "How the Course in Music Can Aid the Blind to Become Socially Acceptable." American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-fourth Biennial Convention, 1938, p. 123.

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the music itself. They must prepare them for life in a world of seeing people so that the visually handicapped adult will be acceptable to his seeing associates. Even though the blind person is an accomplished musician he will not be a success if he is not socially acceptable. He must be instructed in the art of living with seeing people while he is young.

College Education for the Visually Handicapped

In response to the question "Do you feel that visually handicapped students should be encouraged to take music majors in college?" almost all the teachers agree that only the very talented students should be encouraged to pursue music majors. These individuals must possess real musical ability and determination. They must not be afraid of hard work and be able to adjust themselves to college life. Many teachers suggest that students should take education majors so that they would be prepared to teach in other fields besides music since few states have positions open for teaching music in the schools for the blind. Many visually handicapped students have gone to college and majored in music and have become successful teachers. Others have concentrated upon church music and have prepared themselves for the position of organist in churches. A few teachers express the opinion that the blind person who wishes to enter the entertainment field should concentrate upon popular and semi-classical music. Miss Lucille Mahon has expressed her opinion on this subject.

> Of course we know that only the person with outstanding ability may do concert work, and very few blind people reach this goal, but generally

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speaking, just what is meant by the term, "exceptional ability"? How much ability should a pupil possess in order to be encouraged to continue the study of music after leaving the school for the blind. Not only the brilliant literary students, but many with average ability are given college education. Why should not more of our music students receive similar encouragement and aid? Not only the brilliant performers, but those who have a love for music and the ability to teach should be given the opportunity to take further training. None of my sighted teachers were fine performers, yet they were excellent teachers.[5]

The Teaching of Popular Music

Several graduates of schools for the blind indicate that they are able to earn a part or all of their living by playing popular music. Some express the opinion that more training in the playing of popular music while they were students would have been more valuable than so much music of classical nature. In response to the question "Do you feel that piano teachers should give instruction in playing popular music?" twenty-five teachers indicate that they feel popular music should be a part of the pupil's instruction if he is interested in this field and has a talent for improvising and playing this type of music by ear. However, these teachers feel that the student should also receive a good foundation in the fundamentals of good piano technique. Those teachers who do not feel that instruction in popular music has a place in schools for the blind express the opinion that those students who have an interest in the popular field will be able to develop their own style

5. Lucille Mahon, "The Importance of Music In Schools for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 168.

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5. Lucille [illegible], "The Importance of Music in Schools for the Blind," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Fortieth Biennial Convention, 1950, p. 166.

of playing without the aid of a teacher if they are given a good background in classical music.

In her thesis, Miss McCuskey states that there should be more emphasis placed on popular music.

> There is a general feeling against popular music in schools for the blind. If popular music is one of the means by which the visually handicapped can earn money to keep themselves, we should answer this challenge in some way, rather than evading the issue by saying that music of this type is no good. Competition is so keen that the blind should be equipped with the best musicianship possible, including both popular and classical music. Whatever one's belief or taste may be, one must recognize the fact that popular music is part of our everyday living. Teachers should have a sympathetic understanding of the music of the present as well as that of the past.[6]

All of the teachers indicate that the students are allowed to play popular music in their free time. In this way many of the talented students develop the ability to play popular music very well. It is the writer's opinion that the teacher should encourage and aid the student who has talent in the popular idiom and give him instruction if the time is available. "A program that fails to reckon with all phases of music would seem to be incomplete, inasmuch as it disregards individual inclinations. It is often insisted that those with a genuine flair for popular music will learn by themselves. That is true yet to throw any one of these talented folk entirely on his own devices is illogical."[7]

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6. McCuskey, p. 25.
7. Harry J. Ditzler, "Does Popular Music Rate Curricular Attention," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Thirty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1948, p. 163.

of playing without the aid of a teacher if they are given a good background in classical music.

In her study, Miss Rodgers states that there should be more emphasis placed on popular music.

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6. Rodgers, p. 23.
7. Harry A. Ritter, "How Popular Music Suits Particular Attention," American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Sixty-ninth Biennial Convention, 1944, p. 157.

The visually handicapped person who plays popular music must learn most of his music by ear. He can listen to the radio, to records, or to other people. Popular music becomes outdated so quickly that it is impractical to place much of it in Braille. Some people have been interested in developing a method of transcribing popular music into Braille so that it can be read and memorized more rapidly. The Connie Anderson Method is one that has been used successfully.

> The Connie Anderson Method is designed to make music much easier to read, and at the same time it will require less space on the paper. The Braille music notes are retained and some new material added. For the right hand, just the melody is written, and Braille notes are used; for the left hand a chord score is used. In order to read music by this method, a musician must know how to improvise, but even amateurs in the popular music field have this knowledge. The Braille music left hand sign is used when a chord score begins, but a cell is skipped between the left hand sign and the first measure, to show that it is a chord score. In this method, music will not be written bar over bar; instead, all the melody of a chorus will be written, followed by the chord score. This method of music notation is designed to be used for Brailleing popular music.[8]

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8. Connie Anderson, "New Method For Publishing Music in Braille," American Association of Workers for the Blind, Twenty-fourth Convention, 1950, pp. 132-133.

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CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In teaching music to the visually handicapped the teacher must understand and overcome many problems before he can give instruction that will be effective. It is apparent that few of the teachers who begin teaching music to the visually handicapped have adequate preparation for this specialized type of teaching. Perhaps the greatest problem confronting the novice is the necessity to adapt his present knowledge to a method of teaching in which Braille notation is the foundation. The understanding of Braille notation is of great importance to the successful teacher. He must learn the Braille music notation before he can attempt to instruct students, and unfortunately, most sighted individuals who begin teaching in schools for the blind do not have an occasion to learn anything about Braille notation until they are on the job. It seems that there should be better provision for training teachers of the blind.

The visually handicapped teacher, on the other hand, must have a thorough knowledge of staff notation because more and more schools are inaugurating sight-saving programs and the teachers must be able to teach ink-print music. Schools which do not give thorough instruction in staff notation as well as Braille notation should begin to prepare their graduates to teach both sighted and visually handicapped students.

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CONCLUSION

In reading music to the visually handicapped the teacher must understand and overcome many problems before he can give instruction that will be effective. It is important that few of the teachers who begin teaching music to the visually handicapped have adequate preparation for this specialized type of teaching. Perhaps the greatest problem confronting the novice is the necessity to adapt his present knowledge to a method of teaching in which braille notation is the foundation. The understanding of braille notation is of great importance to the successful teacher. He must learn the braille music notation before he can attempt to instruct students, and unfortunately, most sighted individuals who begin teaching in schools for the blind is not here on occasion to learn anything about braille notation until they are on the job. It means that there should be better provision for training teachers of the blind.

The visually handicapped teacher, on the other hand, must have a thorough knowledge of staff notation because more and more schools are incorporating sight-saving programs and the teachers must be able to teach ink-print music. Schools which do not give thorough instruction in staff notation as well as braille notation should begin to prepare their graduates to teach both sighted and visually handicapped students.

Schools for the visually handicapped should make it possible for piano students who wish to become teachers to have experience in teaching piano to both visually handicapped children and sighted children. A few schools have developed programs that give advanced students the opportunity to give lessons to sighted students that live in the town where the school is located. These students should be given a thorough understanding of staff notation so that they may understand the problems of the sighted student and be able to give instruction that is adequate. A program of this type would not be difficult to set up and would be of great value to the visually handicapped pianist.

Music educators should consider the problem of securing large note music for teaching sight-saving students. At present it is very difficult for teachers to obtain large note music. They must enlarge the notes themselves if they wish to use modified ink-print music in their teaching. Now that more schools are expanding their enrollments to accommodate sight-saving students the need for large note music is becoming more acute. Before teachers can give these students adequate help in reading piano music without harming the child's eyes, large note music must be made available.

The writer hopes that more teachers will devote more time to developing their students' ability to memorize music by rote or listening to selections they wish to learn. Many visually handicapped pianists are not given adequate training in learning music quickly by this method. There are few blind musicians

Schools for the visually handicapped should make it possible for piano students who wish to become teachers to have experience in teaching piano to both visually handicapped children and sighted children. A few schools have developed programs that give advanced students the opportunity to give lessons to sighted students that live in the town where the school is located. These students should be given a thorough understanding of staff notation so that they may understand the problems of the sighted student and be able to give instruction that is adequate. A program of this type would not be difficult to set up and would be of great value to the visually handicapped pianist.

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The writer hopes that more teachers will devote more time to developing their students' ability to secure music by rote or listening to mainotions they wish to learn. Many visually handicapped pianists are not given adequate training in learning music quickly by this method. There are few blind musicians

who can satisfy the demands of their positions for a constantly enlarging repertoire unless they learn to assimilate music quickly by ear and rote. Braille notation is too cumbersome to be adequate for all situations. It is very important that church organists, teachers, and entertainers be able to learn music quickly.

Teachers in schools for the visually handicapped must examine their work to see that their students are being given the kind of instruction that will allow them to make the best use of their talents after graduation. Those students who expect to continue their music education in college should be given courses that will give them a background for competing with sighted students in a school designed for seeing students. Students interested in the entertainment field should be given more help in developing the ability to play popular music well and improvise at the keyboard.

Training the student to be careful of his personal appearance and developing an acceptable social behavior is one of the important concomitants of music education. Any peculiar habits which may detract from the student's success in the seeing world should be eliminated. Every teacher should make it his business to give his students help in developing a normal behavior and attitude.

Many teachers suggest that a method of instruction in piano for Braille students should be devised to replace the basic instruction books which are used at present. The Braille

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Training the student to be mindful of his personal appearance and developing an acceptable social behavior is one of the important concomitants of music education. Any negative habits which may detract from the student's success in the seeing world should be eliminated. Every teacher should make it his business to give his students help in developing a normal behavior and attitude.

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piano books are copies of books that have been designed for teaching sighted children and are not adequate for teaching visually handicapped children.

There is still much that can be done in improving the standard of instruction in schools for the visually handicapped. It is the hope of the writer that those who read this thesis will gain a better understanding and appreciation of the problems of the teachers of the visually handicapped and also understand more fully the problems of the students. More research studies should be made in the field of teaching the visually handicapped.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO PIANO TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND

The following questionnaire has been prepared as a means of securing a part of the information that I am gathering for the writing of a thesis for a Master's Degree in Music Education at the University of South Dakota. Will you please answer the questions and give your suggestions and return this as soon as is possible. The topic which I have chosen to develop as a thesis is "THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADEQUATE TEACHING PROCEDURE FOR THE TEACHING OF PIANO TO THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED."

1. Name of Teacher________________________________.

2. Address____________________________________.

3. Name of school________________________________.

4. Number of years you have been teaching piano to the visually handicapped?____________________.

5. What is your professional background?

   a. Degree________________________________.

   b. Where was education received?____________________

   ____.

6. Did you receive any preparation for teaching piano to the visually handicapped before you entered this profession?

   ____.

7. Are you visually handicapped?____________________.

   a. Partially blind____________________________.

   b. Totally blind_____________________________.

8. Did you receive your education at a school for the visually handicapped?______________________________.

9. If you are not visually handicapped, are you able to read and write music Braille?________________________.

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2. Address______________________________.

3. Name of school_________________________.

4. Number of years you have been teaching piano to the visually handicapped?____________________.

5. What is your professional background?

   a. Degree_____________________________.

   b. Where was education received?____________________

   ______________________________________.

6. Did you receive any preparation for teaching piano to the visually handicapped before you entered this profession?

   ____.

7. Are you visually handicapped?____________________.

   a. Partially blind__________________________.

   b. Totally blind____________________________.

8. Did you receive your education at a school for the visually handicapped?____________________________.

9. If you are not visually handicapped, are you able to read and write music Braille?_________________________.

10. What method do you use if you want to have a piece of music transcribed into Braille?

    a. Dictate music to a student________________.

    b. Order the music from the American Printing House_____.

    c. Transcribe it yourself________________.

    d. Have someone else transcribe it________________.

11. If you are visually handicapped, do you employ a reader to assist you in transcribing and reading new music?

    ____.

12. In teaching sight-saving students do you employ a means of making the printed notes larger?________________

    ____

13. Which type of students do you teach? How many students do you have? (Indicate if you teach both types.)

    a. Braille students__________. No.__________.

    b. Sight-saving__________. No.__________.

14. If you are able to read only Braille music, what method do you use in instructing a student who uses ink-print music?________________________________.

15. If you are teaching in a Braille school, are students allowed to use ink-print music if they have enough vision and there is no danger of harming their eyes?__________

    ____

16. At what grade level do you permit children to begin taking piano lessons?

    a. Braille students________________.

    b. Sight-saving________________.

10. What method do you use if you want to have a piece of music transcribed into braille?

a. Dictate music to a student_____.

b. Order the music from the American Printing House_____.

c. Transcribe it yourself_____.

d. Have someone else transcribe it_____.

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a. Braille students_____. No._____.

b. Sight-saving_____. No._____

14. If you are able to read only Braille music, what method do you use in instructing a student who uses ink-print music?_____.

15. If you are teaching in a Braille school, are students allowed to use ink-print music if they have enough vision and there is no danger of hurting their eyes?_____

_____

16. At what grade level do you permit children to begin taking piano lessons?

a. Braille students_____.

b. Sight-saving_____.

17. Do you teach children the Braille notation before they work at the piano keyboard?____________________

____.

18. Do you have any suggestions about introducing and teaching Braille notation?____________________

____.

19. In starting students in piano do you use class instruction or do you start right in with individual lessons?

    a. Class instruction____________________.

    b. Individual lessons____________________.

20. Do you use the John Thompson Modern Course for Piano as your basic piano method? (If you use another method, give name.)____________________.

____.

21. Do you allow the child to hear the selection before he begins to learn it from the Braille?____________________.

22. Will you discuss the method that you use of showing the child the proper ways to use the arms, hands, wrists, and fingers at the keyboard.____________________

____

____.

23. Will you discuss the method you use to help the totally blind child to find his position at the piano.____________________

____

____.

17. Do you teach children the finger notation before they work at the piano keyboard? _____

_____.

18. Do you have any suggestions about introducing and teaching finger notation? _____

_____.

19. In starting students at piano do you use class instruction or do you start right in with individual lessons?

a. Class instruction _____

b. Individual lessons _____.

20. Do you use the John Thompson Modern Course for Piano as your basic piano method? (If you use another method, give name.) _____.

_____.

21. Do you allow the child to hear the selection before he begins to learn it from the staff? _____

22. Will you discuss the method that you use of showing the child the proper way to use the arms, hands, wrists, and fingers at the keyboard. _____

_____

_____.

23. Will you discuss the method you use to help him totally relaxed while in full his position at the piano. _____

_____

_____.

24. Do you require that the child use the exact fingering indicated by the arranger, or do you allow him to use that fingering that allows him the best personal contact with the keyboard?

a. Fingering indicated________________.

b. Adapted fingering__________________.

25. How much provision do you make for the child to listen to different types of piano music so that he may develop his taste and ear for music?______________________________

____.

26. Do you supervise the practice period?__________________.

27. Is the child permitted to come to you at any time to ask for help in reading Braille and in remedying difficulties?

____.

28. If the child has great difficulty in coordinating his hands and his mind, do you require that he be able to perform perfectly before allowing him to proceed to a new piece?

____.

29. Do you allow the child with poor coordination between hand and the Braille to learn his pieces by ear and rote. Discuss____

____.

30. Does your school follow the practice of requiring every child to take some instruction in piano?______________.

31. How soon do you direct the child to some other musical activity or eliminate him entirely from instrumental work if he shows little or no capacity for performing with his hands?____.

19. Do you require that the child use the wrist fingering indicated by the arrows, or do you allow him to use that fingering that allows his hand personal contact with the keyboard?

a. Fingering indicated_____.

b. Adapted fingering_____.

20. How much practice do you make for the child to listen to different types of piano music so that he may develop his taste and ear for music?_____

_____.

21. Do you supervise the practice period?_____.

22. Is the child permitted to come to you at any time to ask for help in reading details and in resolving difficulties?

_____.

23. If the child has great difficulty in coordinating his hands and his mind, do you require that he be able to perform perfectly before allowing him to proceed to a new lesson?

_____.

24. Do you find the child with poor coordination between hand and the English to learn his lesson by ear and rote, rather?_____

_____.

25. Have your school follow the practice of requiring every child to take some instruction in piano?_____.

26. How soon do you direct the child to some other musical activity or eliminate his entirely from instrumental work if he shows little or no capacity for performing with his hands?_____.

32. Do you teach keyboard harmony from the very first as soon as the child can understand the terms and concepts of harmony? ______________________________.

33. Do you require that the child continue to study from the basic piano method once he has learned the keyboard and the Braille notation, or do you start giving him selections from different sources as soon as he is able to read the Braille and interpret it? ______________________________

____

34. Do you allow your piano students to play popular music in their free time? ______________________________.

35. Do you give your students any experience in teaching beginning piano students? ______________________________.

36. As a result of a follow-up study of former students of piano in schools for the blind, I find that most of them play a great deal of popular music by ear as a source of entertainment and income. Do you feel that piano teachers should give instruction in playing popular music? Please discuss. ______________________________

____

______________________________.

37. How much experience do you give your piano students in transcribing their music into Braille? ______________________________

______________________________.

38. What preparation do you give Braille piano students who wish to teach piano to sighted individuals? ______________________________

______________________________.

32. Do you teach keyboard harmony from the very first as soon as the child can understand the terms and concepts of harmony? _____.

33. Do you require that the child continue to study from the basic piano method once he has learned the keyboard and the Braille notation, or do you start giving his selections from different sources as soon as he is able to read the Braille and interpret it? _____

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_____

_____.

37. How much experience do you give your piano students in transcribing their music into Braille? _____

_____.

38. What preparation do you give Braille piano students who wish to teach piano to sighted individual? _____

_____.

39. Do you feel that visually handicapped students should be encouraged to take music majors in college? Is there enough opportunity for them to use this degree to make their living?____________________________________

____.

40. Please add any suggestions or comments you wish to make.

38. Do you feel that visually handicapped students should be encouraged to take music majors in college? Is there enough opportunity for them to use this degree to make their living?

_____

_____

40. Please add any suggestions or comments you wish to make.

APPENDIX B

PIANO TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND WHO ANSWERED THE QUESTIONNAIRE

ALABAMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND (white)

Lucille Mahon
205 East North St.
Talladega, Alabama

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Daniel L. Popovich
3001 Derby St.
Berkeley, California

COLORADO SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND BLIND

Mrs. George H. Hemus
21 East Espanola St.
Colorado Springs, Colorado

FLORIDA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Mary Eleanor Allgaier
234 Rainey Ave.
St. Augustine, Florida

Mrs. Inez Koger
Florida School for the Deaf and Blind
St. Augustine, Florida

GEORGIA ACADEMY FOR THE BLIND

Frank S. Pursley
160 Holmes Ave.
Macon, Georgia

Mrs. Janie G. Ware
946 Glen Ridge Drive
Macon, Georgia

ILLINOIS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Alice M. Geisler
1235 West College Ave.
Jacksonville, Illinois

Edward Jacobs, Jr.
1122 W. State St.
Jacksonville, Illinois

PIANO TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND AND ARE-CERTIFIED THE QUESTIONNAIRE

ALABAMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND (Male)

Imogene Mann
205 East Fourth St.
Talladega, Alabama

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Gertrud L. Hopovich
7001 Levy St.
Berkeley, California

COLORADO SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND BLIND

Mrs. George R. Dunne
21 East Espanola St.
Colorado Springs, Colorado

FLORIDA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Mary Eleanor Allgeier
240 Shirley Ave.
St. Augustine, Florida

Mrs. Inez Sager
Florida School for the Deaf and Blind
St. Augustine, Florida

GEORGIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Frank G. Tarsing
126 Nelson Ave.
Macon, Georgia

Mrs. Janie G. Ware
945 Glen Ridge Drive
Macon, Georgia

ILLINOIS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Alice R. Cantlar
1275 West College Ave.
Jacksonville, Illinois

Edward Jacobs, Jr.
1122 W. State St.
Jacksonville, Illinois

INDIANA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Harriet C. Minor
7725 College Ave.
Indianapolis 20, Indiana

IOWA BRAILLE AND SIGHT-SAVING SCHOOL

Phyllis Ruth Nesbit
Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School
Vinton, Iowa

Mrs. Jean Peterson
803½ W. 9th
Vinton, Iowa

LOUISIANA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Henry Louis Thurman, Jr.
Box 3012 Southern University
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Elmer Andrew Vogts
6811 Rosemont Ave.
Baltimore 6, Maryland

MICHIGAN SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Marie Williams
614 W. Michigan Ave.
Lansing 15, Michigan

MINNESOTA BRAILLE AND SIGHT-SAVING SCHOOL

Ellen E. Pletcher
Shattuck School
Faribault, Minnesota

MISSOURI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Noel M. Chase
3815 Magnolia
St. Louis, Missouri

MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Emma C. Koetitz
3800 2nd Ave. N.
Great Falls, Montana

INDIANA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Martin C. Minor
7725 College Ave.
Indianapolis 20, Indiana

IOWA BRAILLE AND SIGHT-SAVING SCHOOL

Phyllis Jane Hanks
Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School
Vinton, Iowa

Mrs. Joan Peterson
8039 W. 9th
Vinton, Iowa

LOUISIANA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Rev. Henry Louis Guerson, Jr.
Box 3012 Southern University
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Elmer Andrew Vogts
5211 Greenmont Ave.
Baltimore 6, Maryland

MICHIGAN SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Marie Williams
614 W. Michigan Ave.
Lansing 15, Michigan

MINNESOTA BRAILLE AND SIGHT-SAVING SCHOOL

Ellen T. Fletcher
Matthews School
Faribault, Minnesota

MISSOURI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Noel B. Chase
3815 Magnolia
St. Louis, Missouri

MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Esse O. Kneitz
3800 2nd Ave. N.
Great Falls, Montana

ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Sister M. Fabian C. S. J.
253 Baldwin and Magnolia Ave.
Jersey City, New Jersey

NEW YORK INSTITUTE FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

Jean F. Poole
999 Pelham Parkway
New York 69, New York

Mrs. Mary Weir Tanenbaum
999 Pelham Parkway
New York 69, New York

NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Muriel K. Mooney
10 Hull Park
Batavia, New York

Grace T. Towsley
17 North St.
Batavia, New York

NORTH CAROLINA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF

Mrs. Elfreda B. Johnson
Raleigh, North Carolina

Martha Jordan
State School for the Blind
Raleigh, North Carolina

Lucille Sawyer
State School for the Blind
Raleigh, North Carolina

NORTH CAROLINA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF, COLORED DEPT.

Mrs. Maude L. Bass
Garner Rd.
Raleigh, North Carolina

OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Margaret Lindsay
Oklahoma School for the Blind
Muskogee, Oklahoma

ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Sister M. Marion S. S. J.
275 Bunkin and Hampton Ave.
Jersey City, New Jersey

NEW YORK INSTITUTES FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

Jess R. Poole
999 Fulton Parkway
New York 69, New York

Mrs. Mary Ann Carmichael
999 Fulton Parkway
New York 69, New York

NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Muriel K. Mooney
Lo Hall Park
Batavia, New York

Orson T. Lowrey
17 North St.
Batavia, New York

NORTH CAROLINA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF

Mrs. Elfreda S. Jordan
Raleigh, North Carolina

Martha Jordan
State School for the Blind
Raleigh, North Carolina

Lucille Sawyer
State School for the Blind
Raleigh, North Carolina

NORTH CAROLINA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF, COLORED DEPT.

Mrs. Maude L. Dean
Cannon Rd.
Raleigh, North Carolina

OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Taylorsvs Library
Oklahoma School for the Blind
Muskogee, Oklahoma

John Meldrum
414 N. 13th St.
Muskogee, Oklahoma

OREGON STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Frank E. Sanders
700 South Church Street
Salem, Oregon

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Matthew Cvetic, Jr.
934 Saxonburg Blvd.
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

Dr. Benjamin Dunford
109 Lansdale Dr.
Spartanburg, South Carolina

Marion Spigener
Charlotte, North Carolina

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Betty Ann Severson
Gary, South Dakota

TENNESSEE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Mrs. Lois E. Cole
933 McClurkon Ave.
Nashville, Tennessee

Hortense Forman
2305 Pierce Ave.
Nashville, Tennessee

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Beulah Beaver
1700 Congress Ave.
Austin, Texas

Forrest Goodenough
5705 Ave. F.
Austin, Texas

BLIND, DEAF, AND ORPHAN SCHOOL

Lucille Jones
4104 Bullcreek Rd.
Austin, Texas

UTAH SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

R. Paul Thompson
1967 Monroe Blvd.
Ogden, Utah

VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

William W. Monk
431 College Circle
Staunton, Virginia

Edith D. Rogers
411 East Beverley St.
Staunton, Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND BLIND

Winona M. Spurgeon
Box 1
Romney, West Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE COLORED BLIND AND DEAF

Mrs. Katherine B. Robinson
Box 287
Institute, West Virginia

WISCONSIN SCHOOL FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Blanche Cornell
1900 West State Street
Janesville, Wisconsin

Ruth M. Hoppe
1900 West Street
Janesville, Wisconsin

DIAMOND HEAD SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND BLIND

James Gallet
3410 Seaside Ave.
Honolulu 15, Territory of Hawaii

BLIND, DEAF, AND OTHER SCHOOL

Lucille Jones
4204 Bellcrest St.
Austin, Texas

UTAH SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

R. Paul Thorpson
1967 Monroe Blvd.
Ogden, Utah

VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

William W. Hunt
421 College Circle
Staunton, Virginia

Edith D. Rogers
921 East Beverley St.
Staunton, Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND BLIND

Aileen V. Bourgeois
Box 1
Romney, West Virginia

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL FOR THE COLORED BLIND AND DEAF

Mrs. Katherine B. Robinson
Box 207
Institute, West Virginia

WISCONSIN SCHOOL FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Eleanor Gerrard
1500 West State Street
Janesville, Wisconsin

Ruth R. Hoppe
1500 West Street
Janesville, Wisconsin

DIAMOND HEAD SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND BLIND

James Dailey
3600 Kanaina Ave.
Honolulu 13, Territory of Hawaii

ONTARIO SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Eleanor Edmondson
Ontario School for the Blind
Brantford, Ontario

Zella Percy
Ontario School for the Blind
Brantford, Ontario

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO FORMER PIANO STUDENTS
OF SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND

The following questionnaire will be of great help to me in the writing of a thesis for a Master's Degree in Music. Will you please answer the questions and return to me as soon as is possible.

1. From which of the following do you receive the most enjoyment:

   a. Listening to music ( )
   b. Producing your own music ( )

2. Which of the following types of music do you prefer:

   a. Classical ( )
   b. Popular ( )

3. In your own piano playing do you learn your music

   a. By Braille notation ( )
   b. By ear ( )
   c. By a combination of notation and ear ( )

4. Do you use your piano playing to entertain others? ( )

5. When you use Braille music do you prefer

   a. Learning a phrase at a time ( )
   b. Learning a measure at a time ( )

6. When you were taking piano lessons did the teacher play the music for you so that you could learn how the music was to sound before you attempted to learn it with the use of Braille?

   a. Yes ( )
   b. No ( )

7. Since you left school do you transcribe the music that you wish to learn into Braille?

   a. Yes ( )
   b. No ( )

8. How old were you and what grade classification were you in when you first started piano lessons?

   a. Age ( )
   b. Grade ( )

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO SOMEA PIANO STUDENTS OF SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND

The following questionnaire will be of great help to me in the writing of a thesis for a Master's Degree in Music. Will you please answer the questions and return to me as soon as is possible.

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   a. Listening to music ( )
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2. Which of the following types of music do you prefer:

   a. Classical ( )
   b. Popular ( )

3. In your own piano playing do you learn your music

   a. By Braille notation ( )
   b. By ear ( )
   c. By a combination of notation and ear ( )

4. Do you use your piano playing to entertain others? ( )

5. When you use braille music do you prefer

   a. Learning a phrase at a time ( )
   b. Learning a measure at a time ( )

6. When you were taking piano lessons did the teacher play the music for you so that you could learn how the music was to sound before you attempted to learn it with the use of braille?

   a. Yes ( )
   b. No ( )

7. Since you left school do you transcribe the music that you wish to learn into Braille?

   a. Yes ( )
   b. No ( )

8. How old were you and what grade classification were you in when you first started piano lessons?

   a. Age ( )
   b. Grade ( )

9. Do you have the opportunity to use your piano playing to earn money?

   a. Yes ( )
   b. No ( )

10. If the above answer is yes, indicate how you earn this money.

    a. Playing for church ( )
    b. Giving lessons ( )
    c. Dance band or orchestra ( )
    d. Radio programs ( )
    e. Any other ______________________________.

11. When you first received piano instruction was it by

    a. Class instruction ( )
    b. Individual lessons ( )

12. Were you given lessons in Braille notation before learning to play or did you learn the Braille notation as you learned piano lessons?

    a. Before learning to play ( )
    b. As you learned selections ( )

13. When you play the piano do you prefer to use notes as indicated in the original composition for the left hand, or do you make up your own left hand accompaniment?

    ____.

14. Was your teacher at the school for the blind visually handicapped?

    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )
    c. Totally blind ( )

15. With which composers are you the best acquainted?

    a. Beethoven ( )
    b. Bach ( )
    c. Brahms ( )
    d. Clementi ( )
    e. Mozart ( )
    f. Mendelssohn ( )
    g. Greig ( )
    h. Schumann ( )
    i. Schubert ( )
    j. Others ____________.

16. Are you able to read music with either hand while playing?

    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )

9. Do you have the opportunity to use your piano playing to earn money?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

10. If the above answer is yes, indicate how you earn this money.

a. Playing for church ( )
b. Giving lessons ( )
c. Dance band or orchestra ( )
d. Radio programs ( )
e. Any other _____.

11. When you first received piano instruction was it by

a. Class instruction ( )
b. Individual lessons ( )

12. Were you given lessons in braille notation before learning to play or did you learn the braille notation as you learned piano lessons?

a. Before learning to play ( )
b. As you learned melodies ( )

13. When you play the piano do you prefer to use notes as indicated in the original composition for the left hand, or do you make up your own left hand accompaniment?

_____.

14. Was your teacher at the school for the blind visually handicapped?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )
c. Totally blind ( )

15. With which composers are you the best acquainted?

a. Beethoven ( ) f. Mendelssohn ( )
b. Bach ( ) g. Grieg ( )
c. Brahms ( ) h. Schubert ( )
d. Chopin ( ) i. Schumann ( )
e. Mozart ( ) j. Others _____.

16. Are you able to read music with either hand while playing?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

17. Have you had the opportunity to continue piano lessons since leaving school?

    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )

18. What other instrument, if any, did you learn to play in addition to the piano?

    a.____________________________.
    b.____________________________.

19. When you were in school did you play frequently in recitals and other public programs?

    a. Yes ( )
    b. No ( )

20. Do you feel that the musical training you received as a student has been of value to you in your life after graduation?

    ____

Name________________________

Address______________________

17. Have you had the opportunity to continue piano lessons since leaving school?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

18. What other instrument, if any, did you learn to play in addition to the piano?

a._____.
b._____.

19. When you were in school did you play frequently in recitals and other public programs?

a. Yes ( )
b. No ( )

20. Do you feel that the musical training you received as a student has been of value to you in your life after graduation?

_____

Name_____

Address_____

APPENDIX D

PERSONAL LETTERS FROM TEACHERS OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Charles J. Beetz, Director
Lighthouse Music School
111 East 59th Street
New York 22, New York
October 19, 1953

John Meldrum
414 North 13th Street
Muskogee, Oklahoma
October 18, 1953

Mrs. Sonora I. Rieder
621 W. 21st Street
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
July 17, 1953
November 29, 1953

PERSONAL LETTERS FROM TEACHERS OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

Charles T. Deets, Director
Lighthouse Music School
111 East 59th Street
New York 22, New York
October 19, 1953

John Weidrus
414 North 13th Street
Muskogee, Oklahoma
October 16, 1953

Mrs. Simone I. Hieber
621 W. 21st Street
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
July 17, 1953
November 29, 1953

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